Domestic Girlfriend

11

KEI SASUGA

DOMEGIRL

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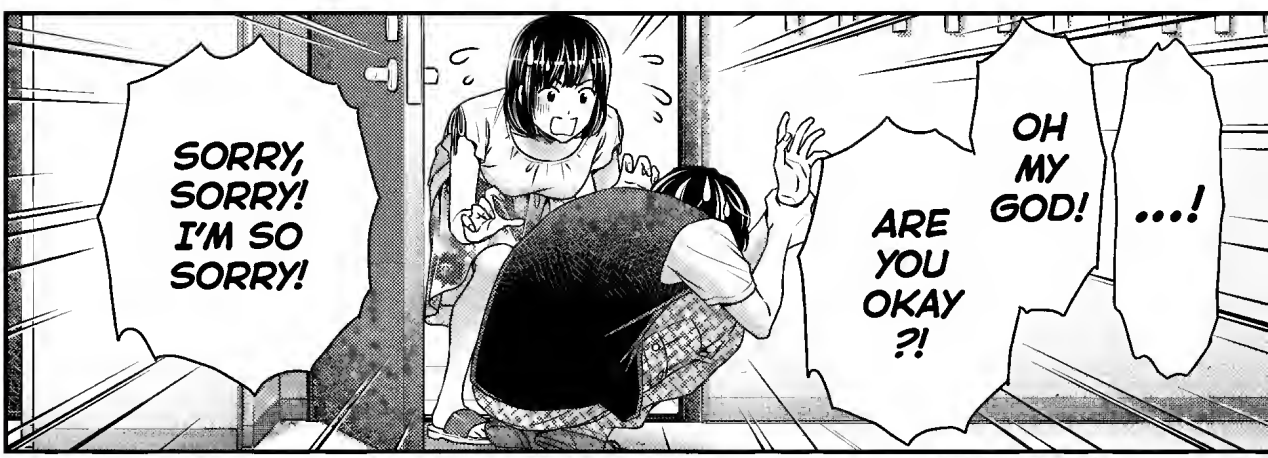
CHAPTER 95: LIE

AAAGH!
WHAM


SORRY, SORRY! I'M SO SORRY!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
OH MY GOD!
...!

YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO PATCH ME UP THAT MUCH.
I JUST SCRAPED MY HAND A LITTLE.

YOUR HAIR'S WAY DIFFERENT, BUT...
WHY...
...DID YOU COME HERE?
I'M KINDA GLAD.
THAT WORRYWART SIDE OF YOU HASN'T CHANGED.
AREN'T YOU...
HAPPY TO SEE ME AGAIN?
...
WHY?
HUH ...?
THE LITERATURE CLUB WENT ON AN OUTING HERE TO WATCH THE FILMING.
ONE OF KIRIYA-SENSEI'S BOOKS IS GETTING A MOVIE ADAPTATION.
THEY'RE FILMING IN THE DESERT TO THE SOUTH RIGHT NOW.
I ONLY CAME TO THIS ISLAND ...
...BY PURE COINCIDENCE.
...

I SAW YOU IN A CAR GOING BY WHILE I WAS THERE.
THEN I HEARD YOU WERE LIVING HERE FROM ONE OF THE STUDENTS.
I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU.
I THOUGHT THIS HAD TO BE FATE...
SWIF
THEN YOU'D BETTER GET BACK BEFORE EVERYONE GETS WORRIED.
IT'S LATE, SO LET ME CALL YOU A TAXI.
THEY SHOULD SHOW UP SOON,
SO YOU SHOULD PROBABLY WAIT OUTSIDE WHERE THEY CAN SEE YOU.
HINA!

I...
EVER SINCE YOU DISAP-PEARED,
I'VE MISSED YOU SO MUCH I COULD BARELY TAKE IT!
I WANTED TO SEE YOUR FACE AGAIN.
TO TALK TO YOU.
I WANTED A CHANCE ...
EVEN IF IT WAS JUST FOR A DAY...

はあ
HUFF
はあ
HUFF
I...
...REALLY MISSED YOU, TOO.

IS THAT ...
WHAT YOU WERE EXPECTING ME TO SAY?
HUH ...?

THINKING BACK ON IT, I STARTED DEVELOPING FEELINGS FOR YOU...
WHEN THINGS WEREN'T GOING WELL WITH SHUU-SAN.
I PROBABLY JUST LET YOUR KINDNESS GET THE BETTER OF MY JUDGMENT.

AFTER SPLITTING UP AND THINKING IT OVER CALMLY, IT FINALLY HIT ME...
...JUST HOW STUPID I'D BEEN.

WHAT?
BUT...
BUT YOU WERE HAPPY WHEN I TALKED ABOUT GETTING MARRIED!
THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW.
AND YOU SUPPORTED MY DREAM OF BECOMING A NOVELIST!
ALL THIS TIME...
I'VE BEEN WRITING MY ASS OFF SO I CAN BECOME A WRITER AND BE WITH YOU AGAIN AS SOON AS I CAN.
I WON A HUGE AWARD, TOO.
AND I FINALLY HAD A ONE-SHOT PUBLISHED IN *BUNGEIKATO* THIS MONTH!
IS ALL THAT...
MEANINGLESS TO YOU NOW?
GOOD FOR YOU.
WHY DON'T YOU KEEP IT UP?
...!
WELL, IT'S A GOOD THING WE BROKE UP, THEN, HUH?

IF WORD HAD GOTTEN OUT ABOUT US...
THEN THE TABLOIDS WOULD BE HAVING A FIELD DAY BY NOW.
"LITERARY AWARD-WINNING HIGH-SCHOOLER AND TEACHER'S FORBIDDEN LOVE!"
THAT WOULD'VE BEEN A BIGGER MESS THAN MY TRANSFER COULD CLEAN UP.
YOU GET THAT, DON'T YOU?
THEN ...
YOU ...
YOU DON'T ...
UH-HUH.
I HAVE NO INTENTION ...
OF GETTING BACK TOGETH-ER.

Bungeikato
Compilation: Predict Japan's Future
Project: The History of Radio
Takashi Hyori, Tetsuo Hien, Uo Shimua, Seki Aoki
JULY ISSUE
BUNGEIKATO
HEH, HEH ...

IT'S FINE...
Bungeikato
THIS IS FOR THE BEST...!

DON'T EVEN START WITH THE FIELD TRIP GOSSIP THING.

IS THERE ...

ANYONE YOU LIKE, BARUSU?

OKAY, THEN ...

THERE HAS TO BE SOMEONE YOU LIKE, RIGHT?

ふ SQUISH

N-NO, THERE ISN'T!

に

THEN, WHAT'S YOUR TYPE?

たぷ BOING

...!

たぷ BOING

YOU DEFINITELY SEEM INTERESTED IN GIRLS...

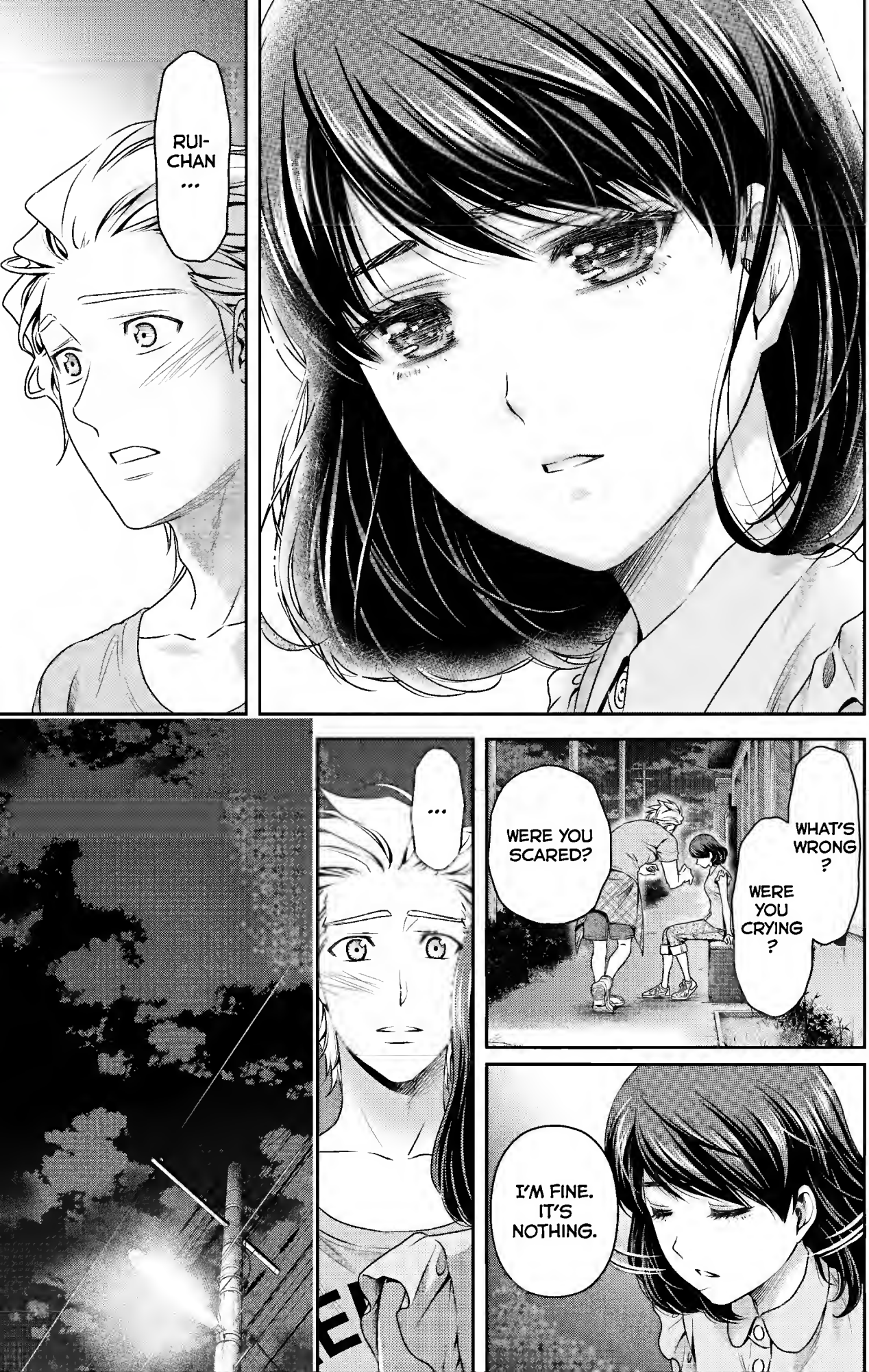
I MEAN,

...BUT I NEVER HEAR ANYTHING ABOUT YOU WHEN IT COMES TO LOVE.

BESIDES, SHOULDN'T YOU SHARE FIRST BEFORE ASKING SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT IF YOU ALL GO FIRST.
KILL!!!
SHE'S THE ONE WHO CRAWLED UP TO ME!
ARE YOU BLIND OR WHAT?!
QUIT GETTING ALL CLINGY WITH MOMO-SEMPAI, BARUSU!
HUH!
ALLIE'S ONLY HAD EYES FOR RUI-RUI EVER SINCE HE TRANS-FERRED.
WHAT? AL-SEMPAI, TOO?
WE'RE THE UNREQUITED LOVE POSSE.
HUH... I DIDN'T KNOW PEOPLE RAISED IN THE STATES COULD BE SHY.
THAT'S A STEREOTYPE, SHIBASAKI-KUN...
PARDON ME.
MMM... I STILL LIKE HER, BUT TO BE HONEST...
...IT'S NOT LOOKING TOO GOOD.
IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE AT A STAND-STILL.
HOW HAVE THINGS BEEN GOING BETWEEN YOU TWO?
HAVE YOU MADE A MOVE?

WOO-HOO! FOOD!
OH, YEAH. WHERE ARE NATSUO-KUN AND RUI-RUI?
PLEASE MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE DINING ROOM.
DINNER HAS BEEN PRE-PARED.
TRRRR
TRRRR
...
HE'S NOT PICKING UP.
NAT-CHAN SAID HE WAS GOING INTO TOWN, BUT...
LEMME CALL HIM.
MAYBE TACHIBANA-SAN IS WITH HIM ...
AH! RUI-RUI ANSWERED!
WHERE ARE YOU?!
GO GET HER, ALLIE!
OKAY. TURN ON YOUR PHONE'S GPS AND WAIT THERE!
OH, NO!
Got it!
I'M STILL IN TOWN,
BUT...
...I GOT LOST.

ALLIE!
NOW'S YOUR CHANCE.
YOU BETTER COME BACK HOLDING HANDS.
MOMO-CHAN...
RUI-CHAN!
THANK GOD I FOUND YOU SO QUICK ...


RUI-CHAN ...
...
WERE YOU SCARED?
WHAT'S WRONG?
WERE YOU CRYING?
I'M FINE. IT'S NOTHING.

RUFL
RUI-CHAN, LOOK OUT!
NEMPHIS
19 79
ATH.DEPT
...

THAT WAS CLOSE... THESE SIDEWALKS ARE REALLY NARROW.
YOU WALK ON THE INSIDE, RUI-CHAN ...
SQUEEZE
...

POP
SHSH
PHEW
...
GULP ごっ
GULP ごっ
GULP ごっ

RUI-CHAN!
C-CAN'T SLEEP?
...NOT REALLY.
I JUST GOT THIRSTY.
UMM...
BEEP
KATHUNK
ARE YOU OKAY?
DON'T WORRY.
I'M ALL RIGHT NOW.
GOOD NIGHT.
YEAH...
SORRY ABOUT EARLIER.
I BET I LOOKED LIKE A MESS.
NO...!
NOT AT ALL!

ARE YOU DRUNK AGAIN?
...
...NO.
IS BEING HERE BY YOUR SIDE...
...TOO MUCH TO ASK, RUI-CHAN?
NO...
IT...
MIGHT NOT BE.

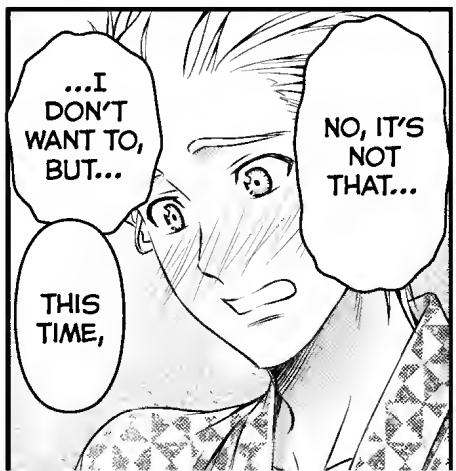
CHAPTER 96: SUDDEN INTIMACY

YOUR BODY TEMP'S ...
REALLY HIGH, HUH?
OH ...
SORRY, I'M PRETTY SENSITIVE TO HEAT.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.

...
TNK
HEY.

ERR... WHAT?!
HUH ?!
A HUG.
DON'T WANNA ?

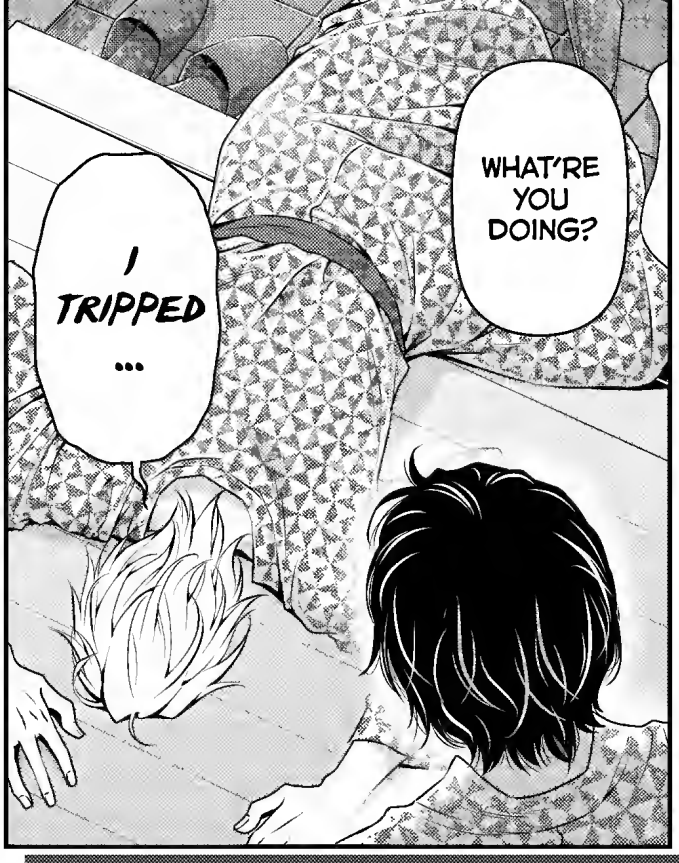
COULD YOU...
...HUG ME FOR A SEC?

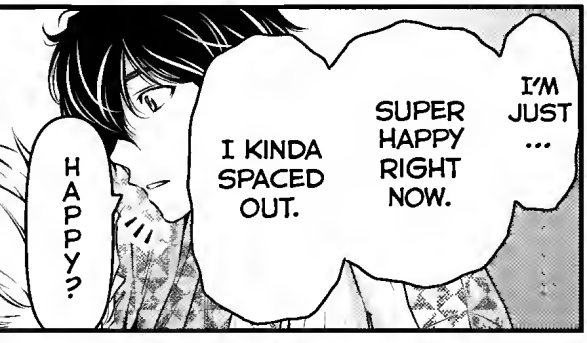

NO, IT'S NOT THAT...
...I DON'T WANT TO, BUT...
THIS TIME,

I PROMISE I WON'T...
...CHANGE MY MIND.
ごくっ
GULP
...!
OKAY.
LET'S GO OVER THERE...
YOU'RE ...
...SWEATING A LOT, HUH?

SQUEEZE
I SAID YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLOGIZE.
SORRY.
I FEEL TOO HOT, RIGHT?
...
BECAUSE I'M NERVOUS.
THIS WARMTH...
...IS WHAT I NEED RIGHT NOW.
BAM
BA-DUNK

I'M NOT...
I'D HAVE ALREADY POUNCED IF I WAS DRUNK.
YOUR FACE IS REALLY RED. DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE DRUNK AGAIN.
YOU OKAY?


I TRIPPED...
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

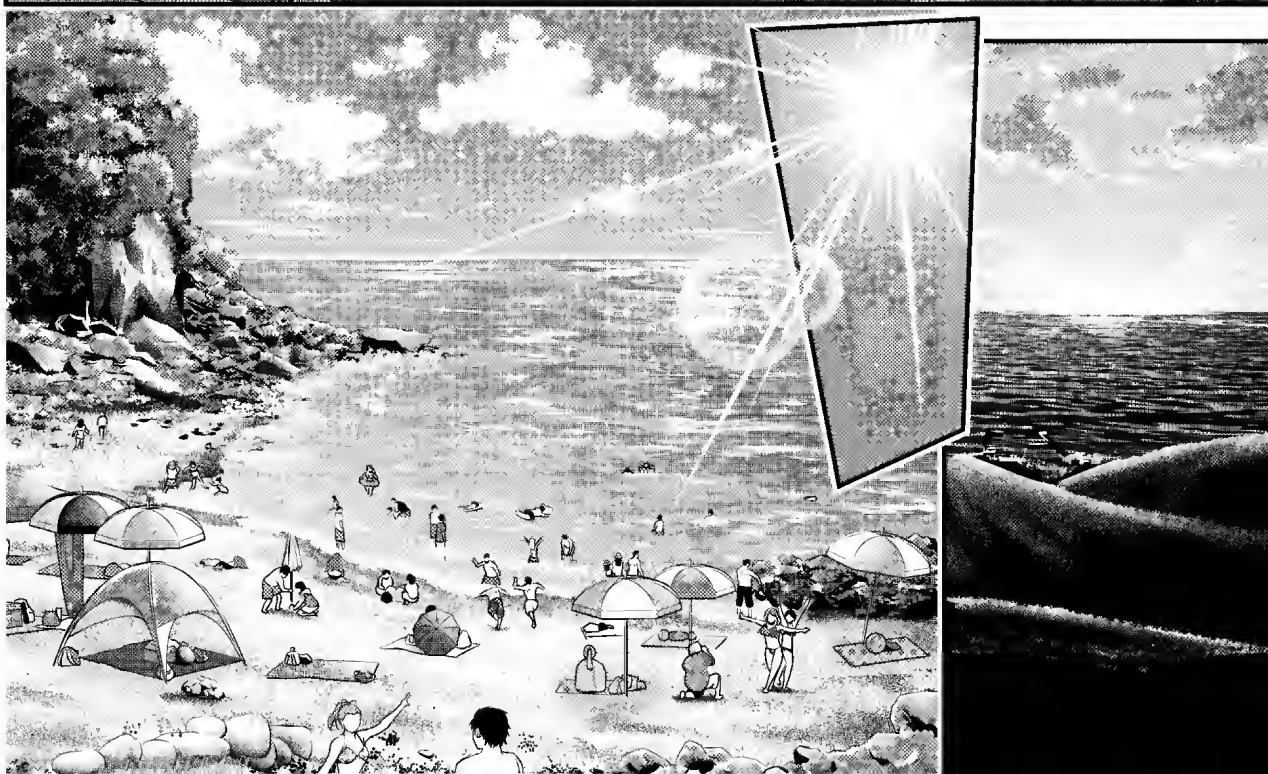

HAPPY?
I KINDA SPACED OUT.
SUPER HAPPY RIGHT NOW.
I'M JUST...

I'M SO HAPPY I DUNNO WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF...
I HONESTLY THOUGHT I DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE.

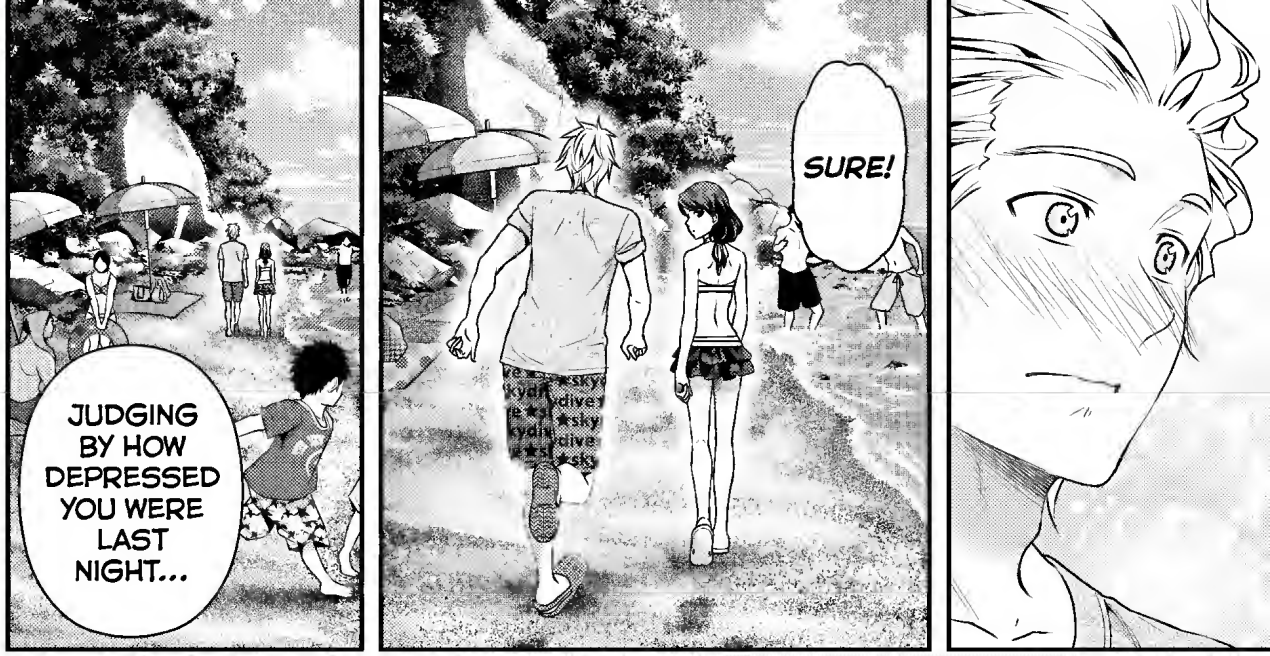
OKAY IF I GO?
IS IT...
HEY...

...ASKED ME OUT ON A DATE.
RUI-CHAN...

A SCUM-BAG LIKE ME...
...DOESN'T HAVE ANY RIGHT TO TELL YOU NO.



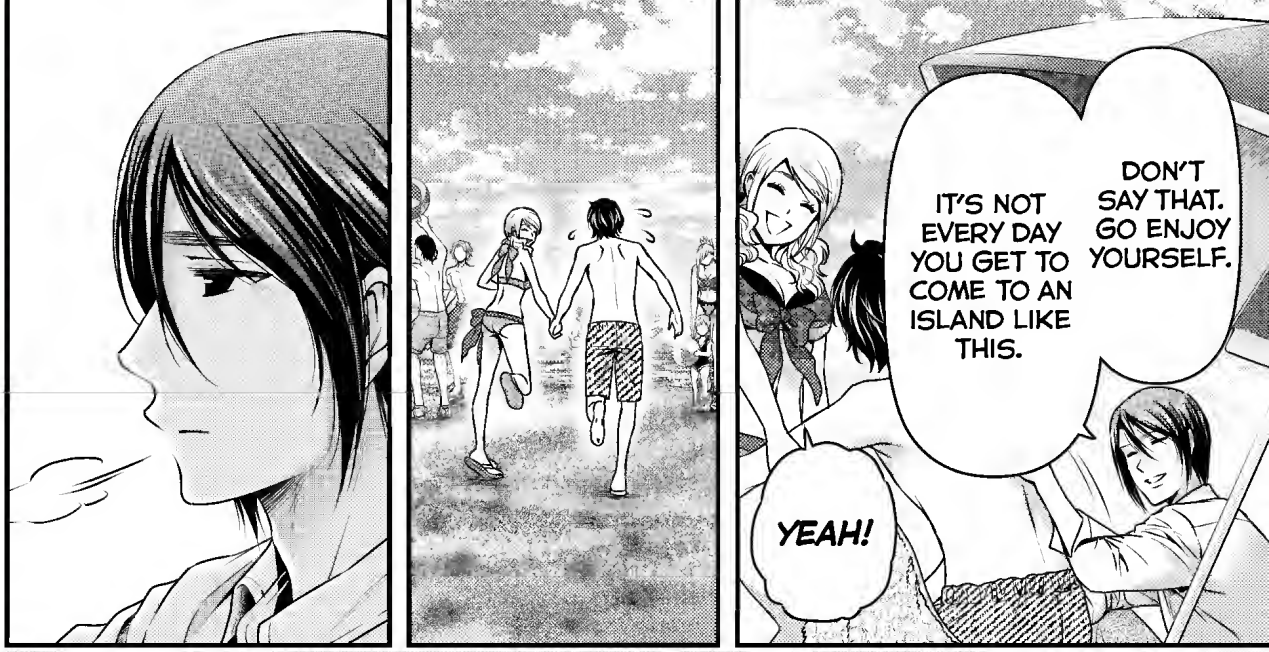
THE OCEAN'S SO PRETTY!
IT'S A PERFECT DAY FOR SWIMMING!
WANNA USE A FLOATY, RUI-CHAN?
I'M GOOD.
I THINK I'LL CHECK OUT THE ROCKS OVER THERE.
ROCKS?
WANNA ...
COME WITH ME?
THAT'S A CUTE SWIMSUIT, MOMO-SEMPAI.
HEH, HEH. ♥ IT'S NEW. ♥
CAN I USE THE PUMP NEXT?

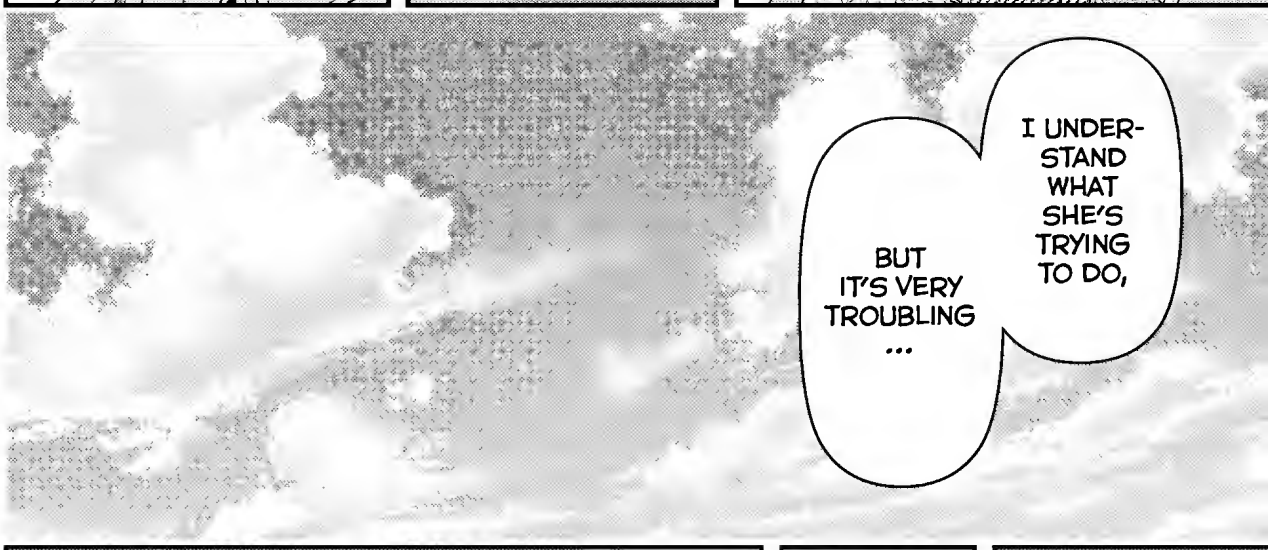

JUDGING BY HOW DEPRESSED YOU WERE LAST NIGHT...
SURE!

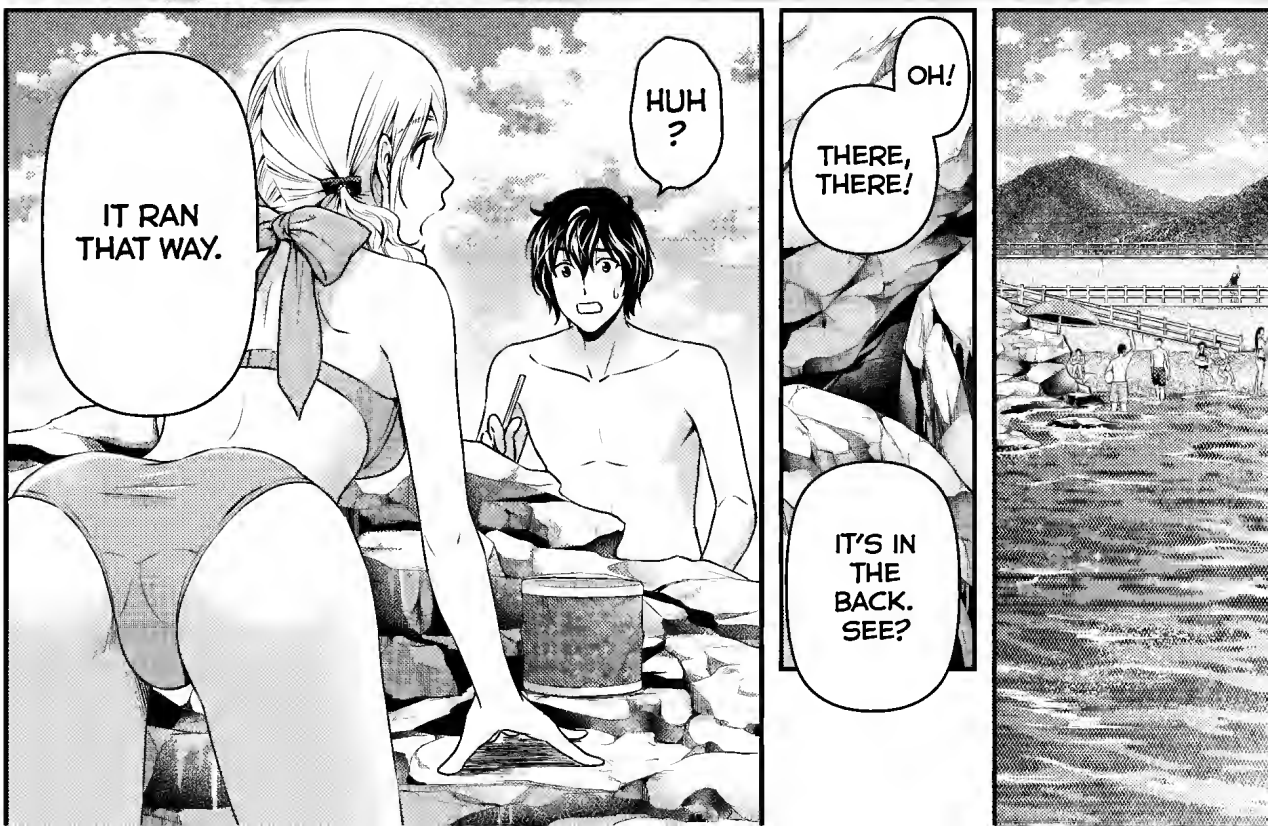
...I TAKE IT YOU MET WITH TACHIBANA-SENSEI?
...
YEAH.
SHE PUT AN END TO EVERYTHING.

MEAN-ING?
I HAD A FEELING WHEN SHE DIDN'T SEEM HAPPY TO SEE ME,
THEN WHAT SHE SAID DROVE IT HOME.

SHE BRUSHED OFF ALL THE NEWS ABOUT MY WRITING EVEN THOUGH SHE CHEERED ME ON BEFORE.
SHE JUST SAID, "WELL, IT'S A GOOD THING WE BROKE UP, THEN."
AND THAT WE'D BE ALL OVER THE TABLOIDS IF OUR RELATIONSHIP GOT OUT.
THAT HER TRANSFERRING WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ENOUGH TO SOLVE THINGS.
THEN LASTLY, SHE TOLD ME...
SHE HAS NO INTENTION OF GETTING BACK TOGETHER.
IS...
THAT SO?
SKSH
SKSH
C'MON, NATSUO-KUN! WE CAME ALL THE WAY TO THE BEACH! LET'S PLAY!
MIND IF I BORROW NATSUO-KUN, SENSEI?
GO RIGHT AHEAD.
SORRY, I'M NOT REALLY IN THE MOOD...
AWW.


DON'T SAY THAT. GO ENJOY YOURSELF.
IT'S NOT EVERY DAY YOU GET TO COME TO AN ISLAND LIKE THIS.
YEAH!


I UNDER-STAND WHAT SHE'S TRYING TO DO,
BUT IT'S VERY TROUBLING ...


HUH ?
IT RAN THAT WAY.
OH!
THERE, THERE!
IT'S IN THE BACK. SEE?

WELL,
I GUESS IT'S FUN, BUT...

WHY ARE WE CATCHING CRABS, ANYWAY?
'CUZ IT'S FUN!
WE COULD SWIM, BUT THE ROCKS HERE ARE REALLY NEAT.

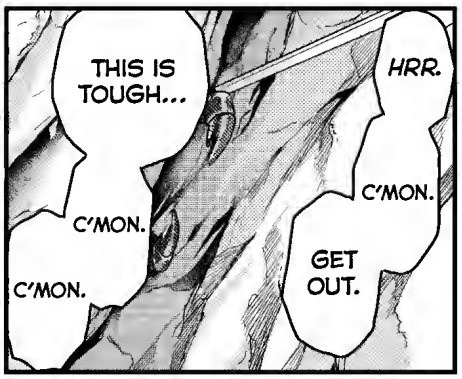
FIND ONE?
YEAH.
BUT IT'S HIDING IN THE BACK.

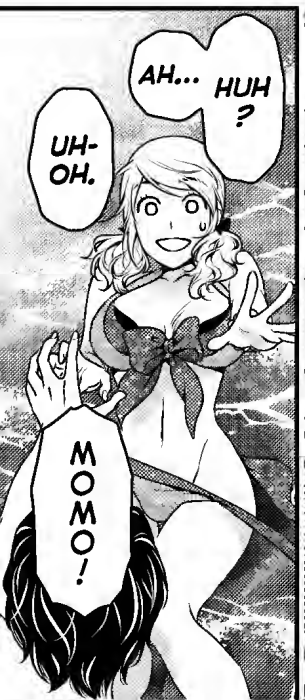
AH.

NICE ONE, NATSUO-KU-
SKFF

AW'RIGHT! GOT ONE!
WOOO! QUEST COMPLETE! ♥

THAT'S WHERE THE CHOP-STICKS COME IN!
OH...
OKAY.


THIS IS TOUGH...
HRR.
C'MON.
C'MON.
C'MON.
GET OUT.


AH... HUH?
UH-OH.
MOMO!

SKIT
AH!
JUST A LITTLE FURTHER...
HERE IT COMES!
HUP!
SKIT

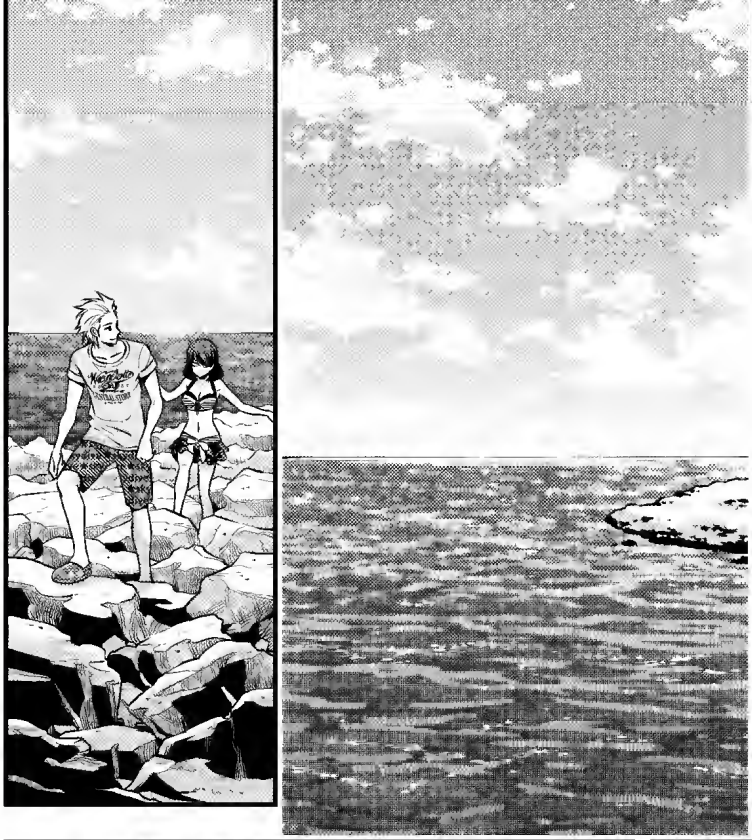
AAAH!
!
BLUB
BLRBRBR

NAT-
SUO-
KUN
?!

NA-

BWAH!
ARE YOU
OKAY,
NATSUO-
KUN?!

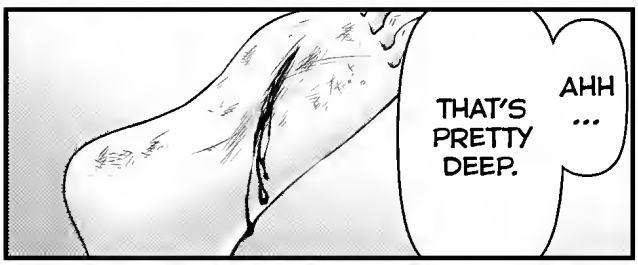
I WOULDN'T CALL IT GOOD...
I THOUGHT YOU GOT BITTEN BY A SHARK OR SOMETHING.
GOOD THING ...
...IT WAS JUST A BLOODY NOSE.
BUT, GETTING WORKED UP HUNTING CRABS...
...HELPED TAKE YOUR MIND OFF OF THINGS, RIGHT?
YOU SEEMED REALLY DOWN SINCE YESTER-DAY,
MOMO ...
SO I WANTED TO CHEER YOU UP.
... THANKS.



GRR!
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL,
BUT PEOPLE ARE LOOKING AT YOU WEIRD...
OKAY?
SHH!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM, MOMMY?

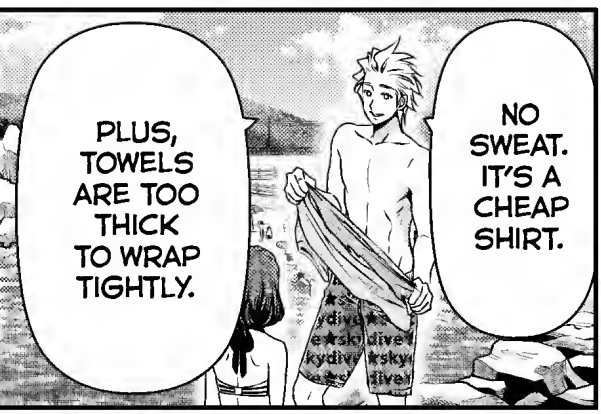
I THINK...
I CUT MY FOOT ON THE ROCKS.
SHOW ME.

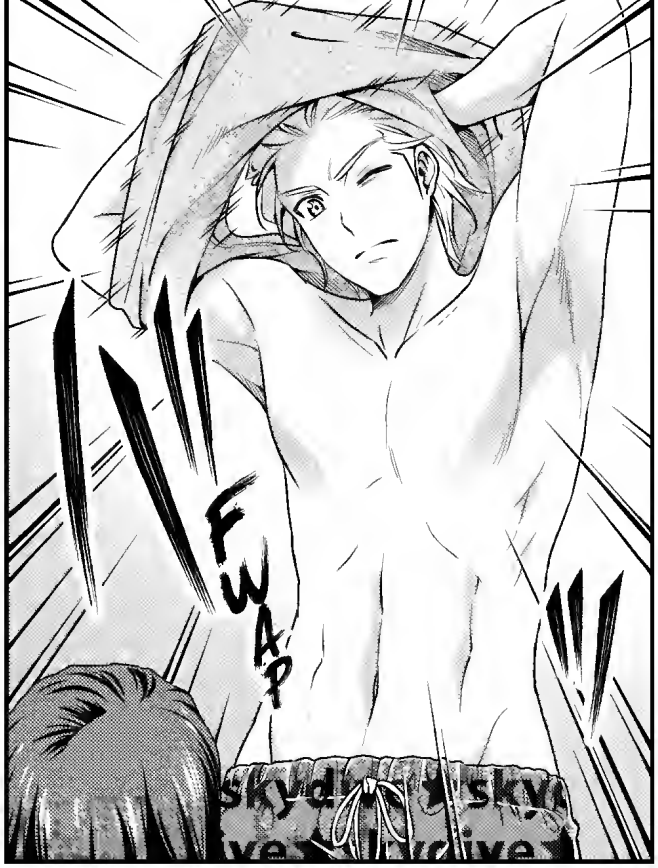
SHFK
...!
OW!
YOU OKAY, RUI-CHAN?!

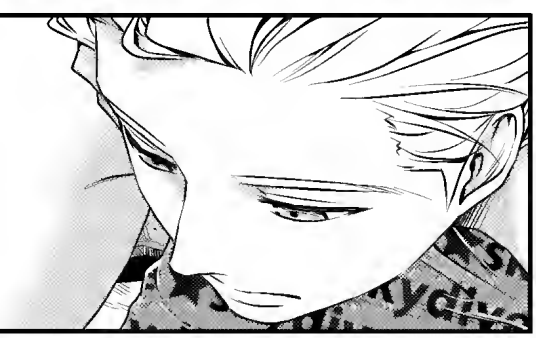

AHH...
THAT'S PRETTY DEEP.

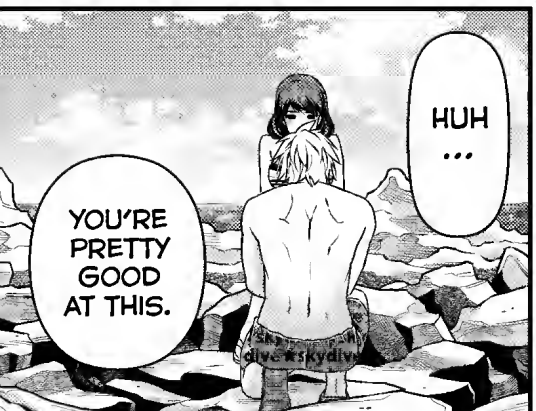
IT'S FINE. I THINK I CAN MAKE IT BACK TO SHORE.
NUH-UH.
WHAT IF IT GETS INFECTED?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT!
WE HAVE TOWELS...
HUH ?!
SHRRRT

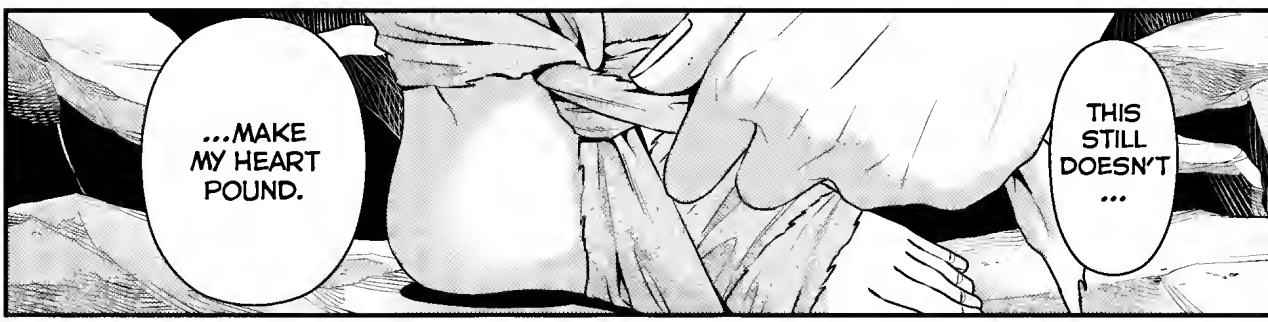

PLUS, TOWELS ARE TOO THICK TO WRAP TIGHTLY.
NO SWEAT. IT'S A CHEAP SHIRT.

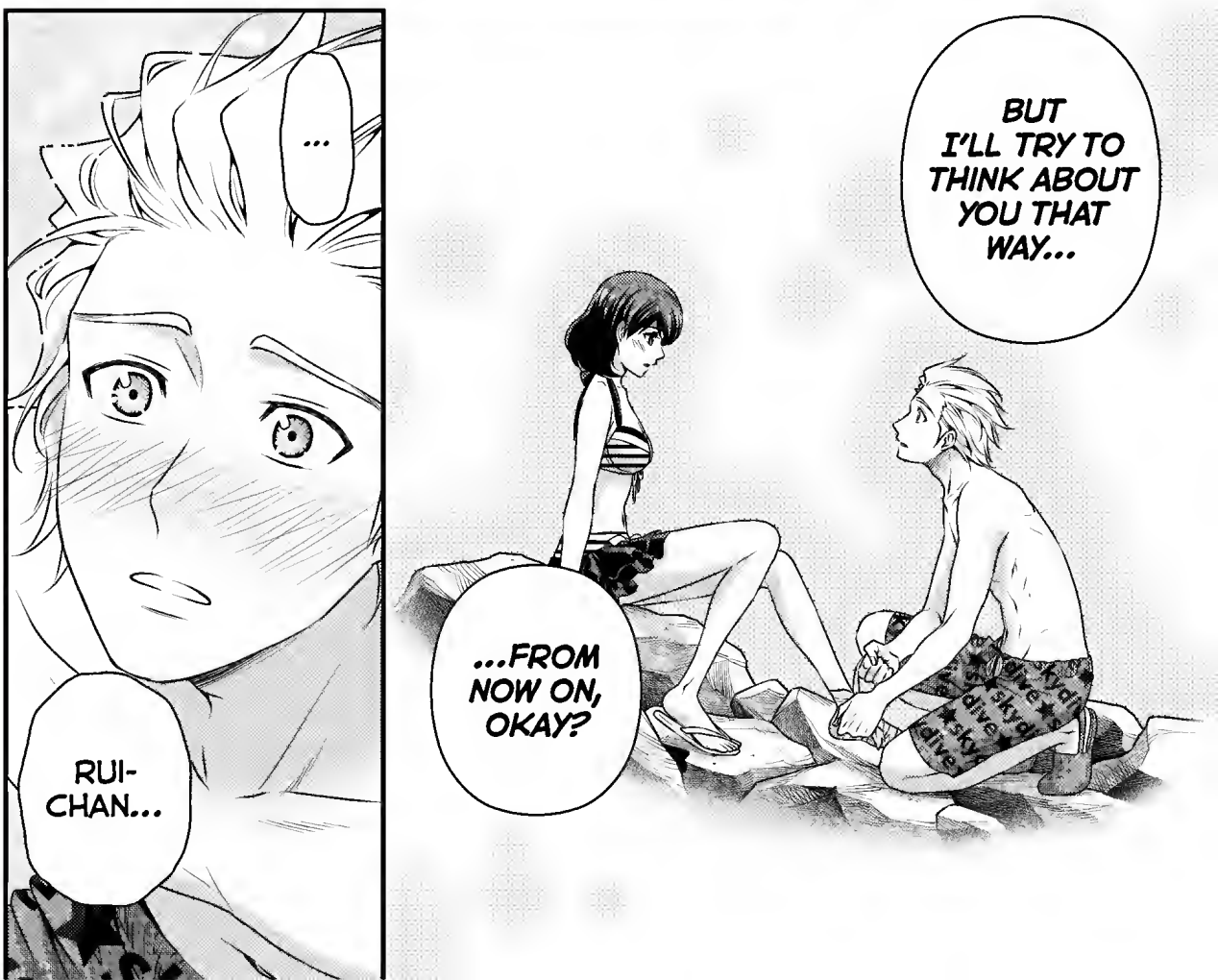

FWAP




HUH ...
YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD AT THIS.

HMM ...
HE TAUGHT ME WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY.
WELL, YEAH.
MY DAD WAS IN THE MILITARY, AFTER ALL.


...MAKE MY HEART POUND.
THIS STILL DOESN'T ...


...
RUI-CHAN...
...FROM NOW ON, OKAY?
BUT I'LL TRY TO THINK ABOUT YOU THAT WAY...

NO WAY ...
HUH ?
SERI-OUSLY?! DIVINE PUNISH-MENT?!
MY PHONE'S GONE...
WHAT'S WRONG ?
STRONGLY OUTTA GUY-JAPAN
PUNISHMENT FOR WHAT...?
CAN I GO LOOK FOR IT?
I HAVEN'T SEEN IT SINCE LAST NIGHT, SO I PROBABLY LEFT IT IN TOWN.
YEAH ...
DID YOU LOOK EVERY-WHERE?
YOU LOST YOUR PHONE?
YOU'RE GETTING KIND OF DARK, OSAKA-KUN...
THAT'S WHAT HE GETS FOR FLIRTING WITH MOMO-SEMPAI.
SWEET, SWEET JUSTICE.
HA HA
MWA HA
OKAY!
SORRY, I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
MAKE IT QUICK. THE BOAT WON'T WAIT LONG FOR YOU!
DASH
HWAH ?
ARE YOU OKAY, MATSUKAWA-KUN? YOU LOOK A LITTLE OUT OF IT.
MAYBE SOMEONE TURNED IT IN SOME-WHERE.
I HOPE HE FINDS IT. HE CAN'T JUST COME BACK FOR IT ONCE WE LEAVE.

SEM-PAI!
I THINK THAT PERSON FOUND IT!
UMM. THE OWNER'S NAME IS FUJII.

IT HE DOESN'T FIND IT, HE COULD REPORT IT MISSING TO THE POLICE AND...
YES, I'D LIKE TO RETURN IT TO A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WHO'S STAYING HERE.

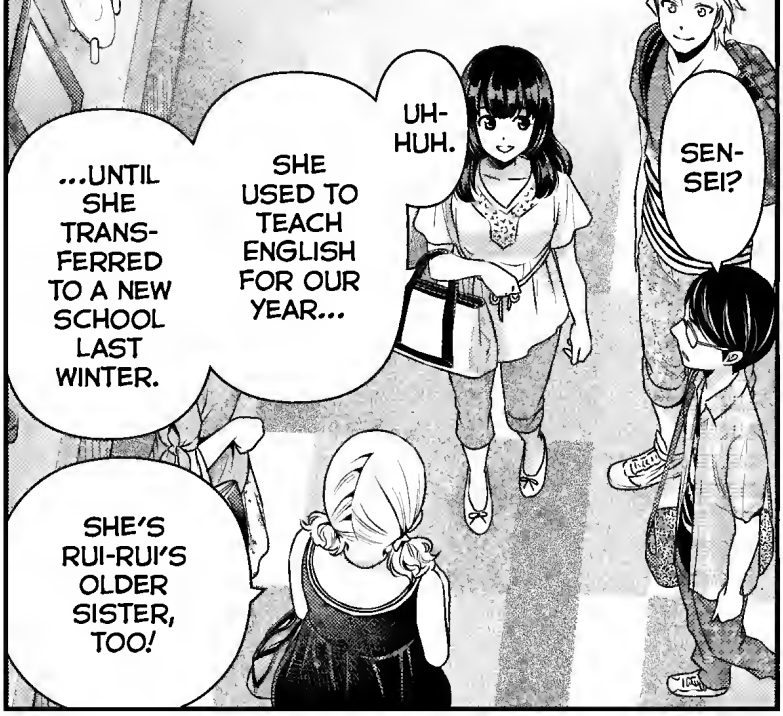
HUH ...?

REAL-LY?
AT THE COUNTER.

TACHIBANA-SENSEI?!

HINA-NEE...
!

CHAPTER 97: RESPECTIVE RESOLVE


SEN-SEI?
UH-HUH.
SHE USED TO TEACH ENGLISH FOR OUR YEAR...
...UNTIL SHE TRANS-FERRED TO A NEW SCHOOL LAST WINTER.
SHE'S RUI-RUI'S OLDER SISTER, TOO!

OH.
YEAH ...
HEY, EVERY-ONE...
YOU CUT YOUR HAIR!
IT LOOKS CUTE!♥

LONG TIME NO SEE,
HINA-NEE.

...
YOU...
GREW YOUR HAIR OUT.

HUH?
YOU HADN'T SEEN HER, EITHER, RUI-CHAN?
YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD US SHE WAS LIVING ON THE ISLAND!

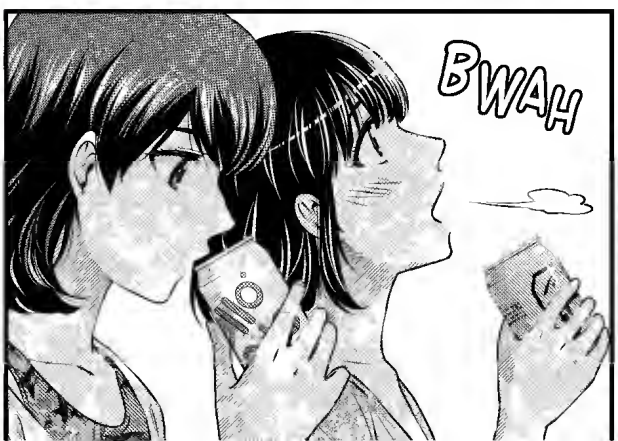
RIGHT?
GLAD YOU NEXT

KIRIYA-SENSEI.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
LIKE-WISE.
TACHI-BANA-SENSEI!
I CAME TO RETURN FUJII-KUN'S PHONE. WE RAN INTO EACH OTHER IN TOWN YESTERDAY.
I SEE.
THANK YOU FOR BRINGING IT.
I HOPE YOU'VE BEEN DOING WELL.
I HAVE,
THANK YOU...
KIRIYA-SENSEI.
I'D LIKE TO SPEAK WITH MY SISTER FOR A BIT.
DO WE HAVE TIME?
GLAD YOU NEXT
YES.
GO AHEAD.

HERE.
お酒

I HEARD YOU'RE A REGULAR AT THE LOCAL LIQUOR STORE.
THE CLERK TOLD US.
AREN'T YOU?
UGH... I'M SO ASHAMED.

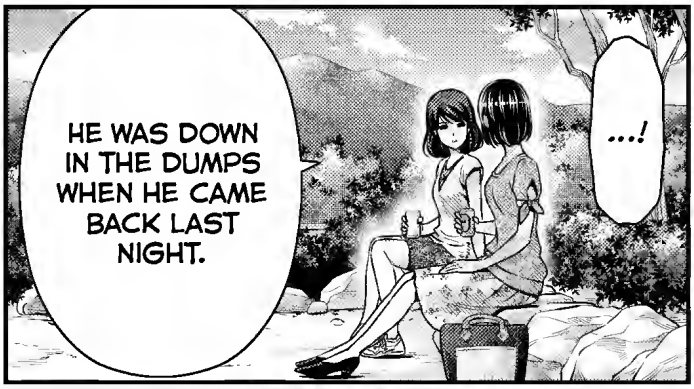
THANKS...
WAIT, WOULDN'T YOU USUALLY PICK COFFEE OR SOMETHING?
OH?
I THOUGHT I WAS BEING CONSIDERATE.
WHAT KIND OF DRUNK DO YOU TAKE ME FOR?

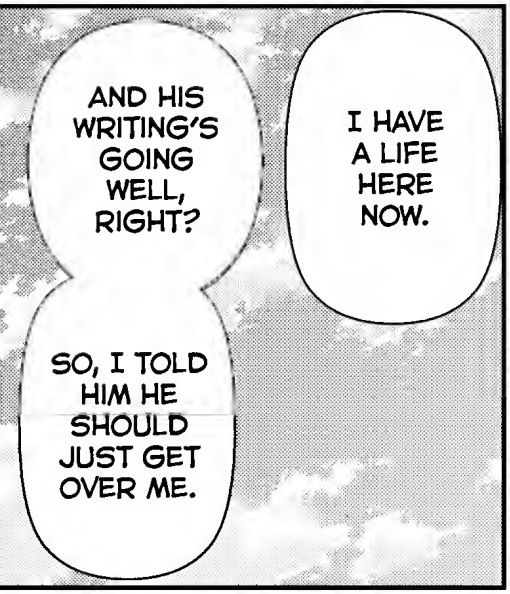

BWAH

WELL, DOWN THE HATCH...
ごっ GULP
ごっ GULP
プシュー PSSH

WHAT ON EARTH ...
DID YOU SAY TO NATSUO?

HE WENT TO YOUR PLACE, DIDN'T HE?


HE WAS DOWN IN THE DUMPS WHEN HE CAME BACK LAST NIGHT.
...!


AND HIS WRITING'S GOING WELL, RIGHT?
I HAVE A LIFE HERE NOW.
SO, I TOLD HIM HE SHOULD JUST GET OVER ME.

I MADE IT CLEAR THAT I DON'T PLAN...
...ON GETTING BACK TO-GETHER.

HUH ...?
YOU PROBABLY CRIED ALL NIGHT, DIDN'T YOU?

LIAR.

YOU'RE TRYING TO HIDE IT WITH MAKEUP,
BUT I CAN TELL HOW SWOLLEN YOUR EYES ARE.

I KNEW IF HE DID...
HE'D JUST REMEMBER HIS FEELINGS.
THAT'S WHY, I DIDN'T TELL HIM YOU WERE LIVING HERE.

TO BE HONEST,
I DIDN'T WANT TO LET HIM SEE YOU.

BUT ...
...WHILE YOU WERE GONE.
HOW MUCH I FELL FOR HIM...
THAT JUST GOES TO SHOW ...
...HE CHOSE YOU IN THE END,
HINA-NEE.
I DON'T GET IT.

I'LL ADMIT, I WAS SHOCKED WHEN I FOUND OUT YOU TWO WERE DATING,
BUT I THOUGHT YOU MUST'VE BEEN PRETTY SERIOUS ABOUT EACH OTHER TO ACTUALLY GO THROUGH WITH IT.
HOW COULD YOU PUSH AWAY SOMEONE ...
WHO LOVES YOU SO MUCH?!
WHY WOULD YOU SAY THAT?!
DON'T YOU LOVE HIM?!

YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN NATSUO AFTER YOU DISAPPEARED!
WERE YOUR FEELINGS THAT WEAK?!
YOU JUST BREAK IT OFF AS SOON AS PEOPLE FOUND OUT?
AND YET ...

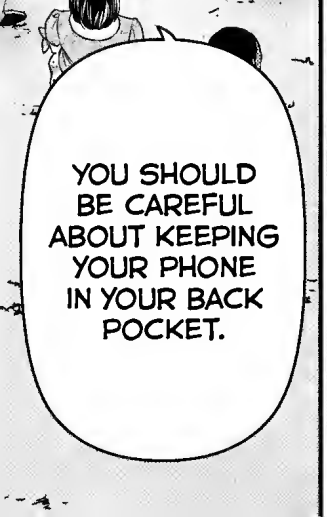
IF YOU LOVE HIM, THEN BE MORE HONEST WITH YOURSELF!
DON'T YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY, HINA-NEE?!
EVEN IF IT MEANT WE HAD TO RUN AWAY TOGETHER ...
I'D NEVER MAKE SOME-ONE I LOVE THAT SAD.

IT'S BECAUSE I LOVE HIM.
...!
JUST THINKING ABOUT HIM...
...IS ENOUGH TO MAKE ME CRY.
FOLLOWING MY HEART WOULD'VE ENDED IN DISASTER.
IF IT WAS JUST ABOUT BEING TOGETHER ...
WE COULD HAVE ELOPED OR DONE ANY NUMBER OF THINGS,
BUT ...
...NATSUO HAS A FUTURE...
...AND DREAMS OF HIS OWN.

NO ONE'S HAPPIER THAN ME...
TO WATCH HIM SUCCEED AS AN AUTHOR.
I WANTED TO RUN UP AND HUG HIM WHEN I FOUND OUT.
RE-ALLY.
I DIDN'T WANT MY FEELINGS ...
TO DRAG HIM DOWN.
BUT IF...
...BEING WITH ME...
ENDS UP MAKING HIM SUFFER DOWN THE LINE...
...THEN I'M FINE IF WE NEVER SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN.

WELCOME BACK, NATSUO-KUN.
HEY... I... COULDN'T FIND MY PHONE...
I'M NOT SUR-PRISED.
?

HI-
SEN-SEI...

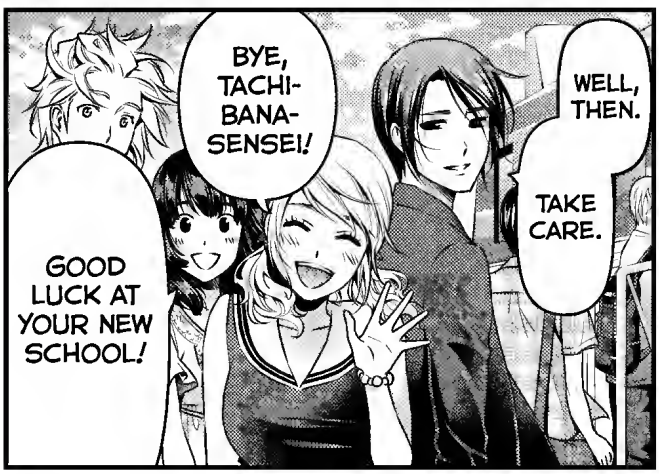

YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL ABOUT KEEPING YOUR PHONE IN YOUR BACK POCKET.

A KIND WOMAN CAME TO RETURN IT.

WHEN WE RAN INTO EACH OTHER YESTERDAY,
I SAW THAT YOU DROPPED YOUR PHONE AFTER WE FINISHED CHATTING.
I WASN'T SURE WHAT TO DO.
THANKS...
SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE ...
YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL...
...NOT TO LOSE THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU.
GLAD YOU EXI

ZIIIP
WHAT'S THAT, NAT-CHAN?
WHY DO YOU KEEP IT IN YOUR WALLET?
IS IT A GOOD-LUCK CHARM OR SOME-THING?
YEAH,
YOU COULD SAY THAT.
IT'S ...
...SOME-THING THAT KEPT ME GOING.

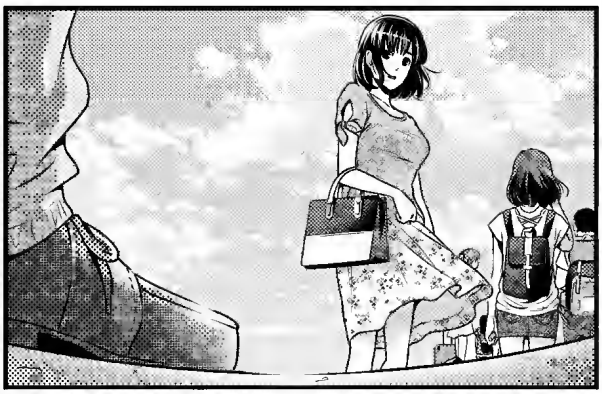
I HOPE THE BOAT DOESN'T TIP OVER ...
THE SEA BREEZE FEELS NICE, HUH?
HWOO! IT'S SO WINDY!


BYE, TACHI-BANA-SENSEI!
WELL, THEN.
TAKE CARE.
GOOD LUCK AT YOUR NEW SCHOOL!

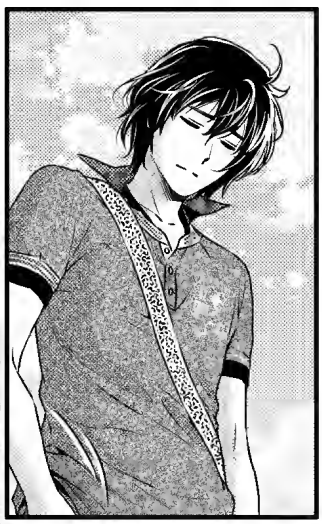
THANK YOU FOR SEEING US OFF.
NO PROB-LEM.
I WAS FREE, ANYWAY.

BYE ...
TAKE CARE, HINA-NEE.

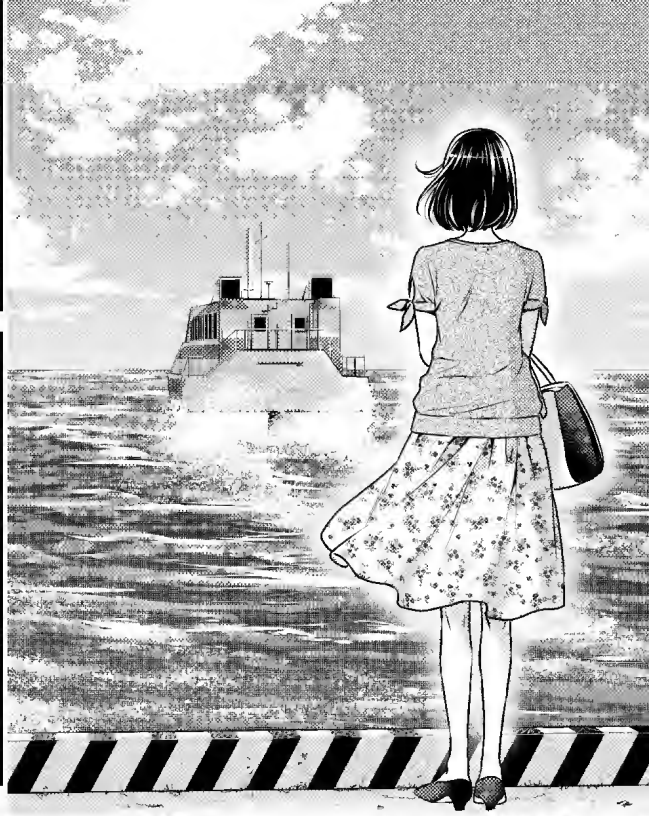
...
YOU, TOO.



THANK YOU.



GOOD-BYE,
HINA.
ゴゥン DRUB
ゴゥン DRUB
ゴゥン DRUB



TAKES TWO HOURS TO GET BACK TO THE MAINLAND, EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN SEE IT FROM THE ISLAND.
LOOK HOW FAR WE ARE ALREADY!
とFUMP
すっ

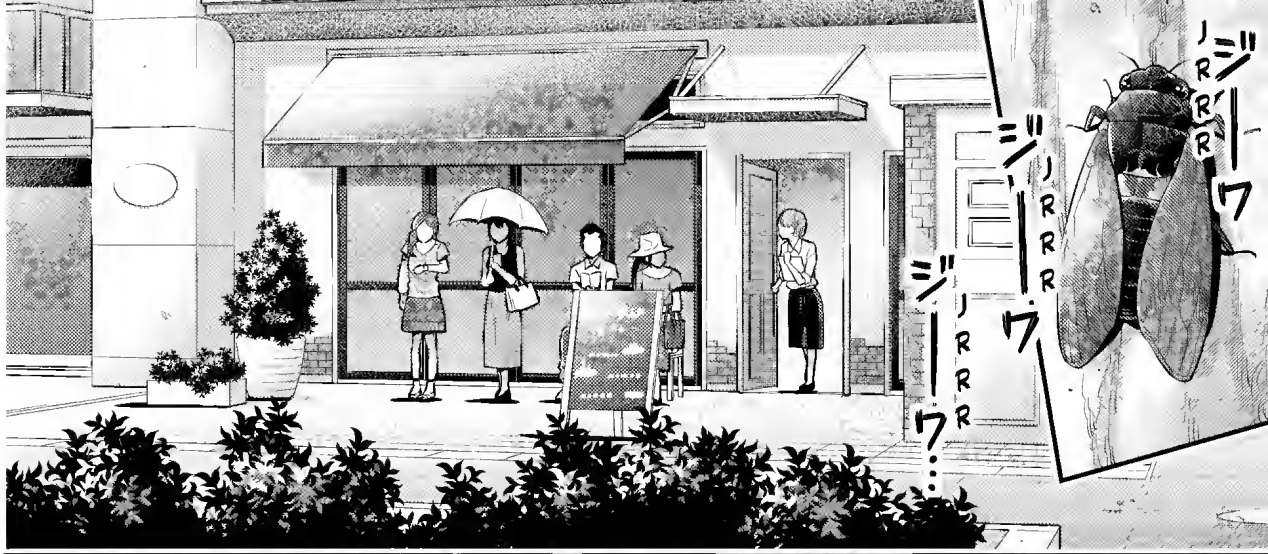
HUH?
HM?
WHAT'S WRONG, NATSUO-KUN?

I WON-DER...
...IF THIS MEANS I'M STILL A CHILD.

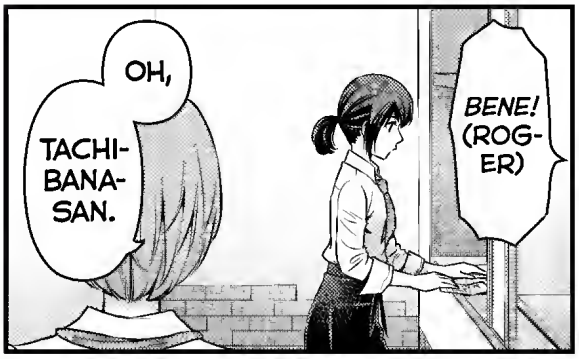
RU-
RUI-CHAN?

NOTH-ING...
THE SUN'S JUST REALLY BRIGHT ...

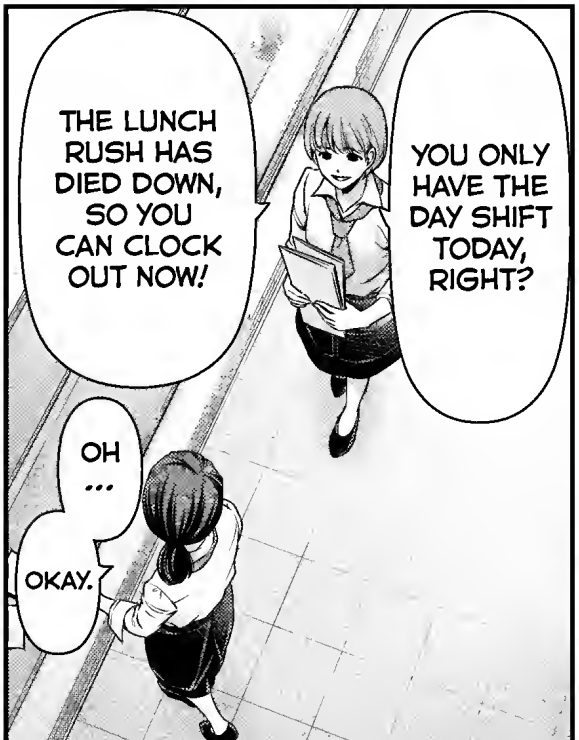
CHAPTER 98: MISTAKE...?


ジーワ
JRRR
ジーワ
JRRR
ジーワ
JRRR
ジーワ…

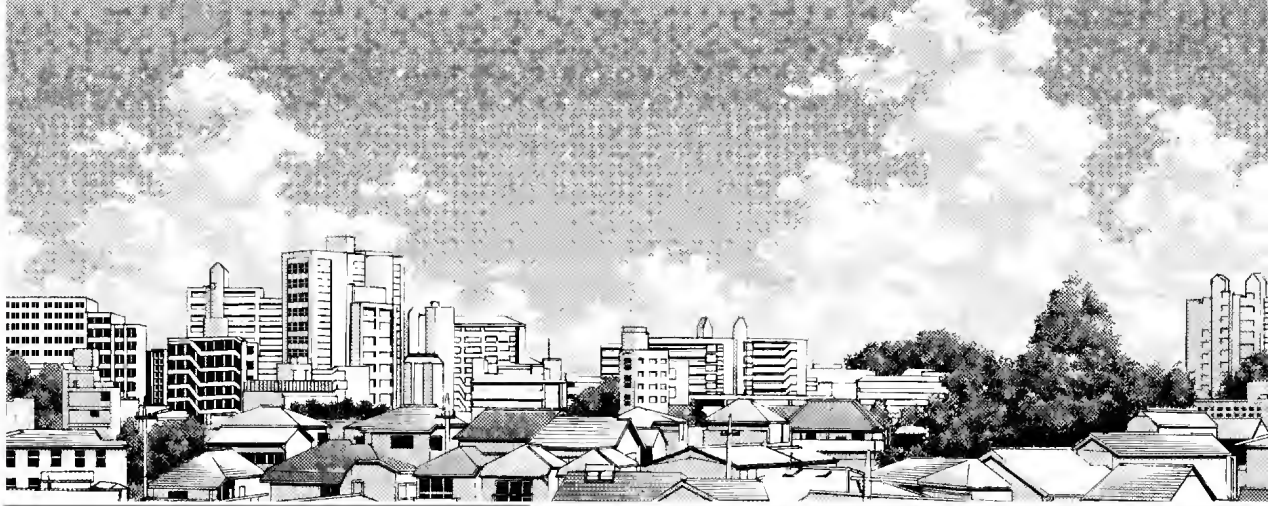
READ IT!
COMANDA (ORDER) IN!

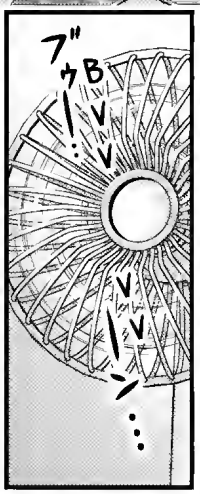

OH, TACHI-BANA-SAN.
BENE! (ROG-ER)

TRE COPERTI. (PARTY OF THREE)
BAGNA CÀUDA, UNO.
PESCATORA, UNO.
PUTTANESCA, DUE.
TIRAMISU, TRE FOR DESSERT!


THE LUNCH RUSH HAS DIED DOWN, SO YOU CAN CLOCK OUT NOW!
YOU ONLY HAVE THE DAY SHIFT TODAY, RIGHT?
OH …
OKAY.

ガチャ
CLACK
HEY.
GOOD WORK TODAY.
TAKING OFF?
HEY, I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK.
S-SURE. WHAT'S UP?
CAN YOU GIVE ME MORE SHIFTS?
MORE?
I'D SAY YOU'RE ALREADY WORKING PLENTY.
YOU'RE ONLY OFF ONE DAY PER WEEK ...
THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR WILL BE ON MY ASS IF I LET YOU WORK ANY MORE.
I KNOW YOU WANNA HURRY AND GET IN THE KITCHEN,
BUT DON'T PUSH YOURSELF.
OR DO YOU NEED THE MONEY?
...
WORKING JUST ...
...KEEPS ME FROM THINKING TOO MUCH.
RUI ...

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BVVV
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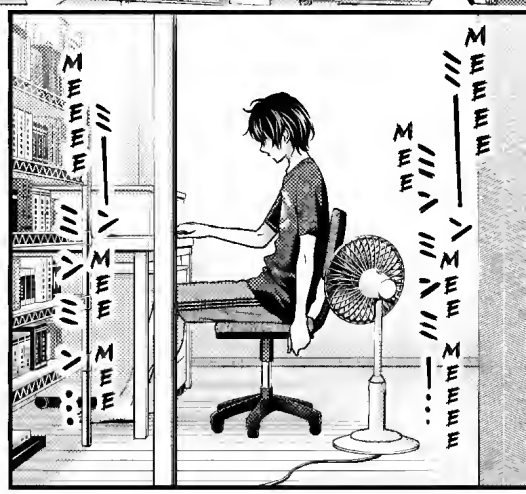
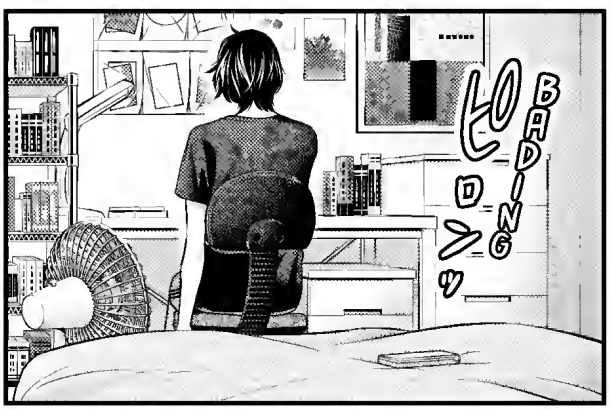

MEEEE
ミーーーン
MEE
MEEEE
ミーン
MEE
MEE
ミーン
MEEEE
ミーン…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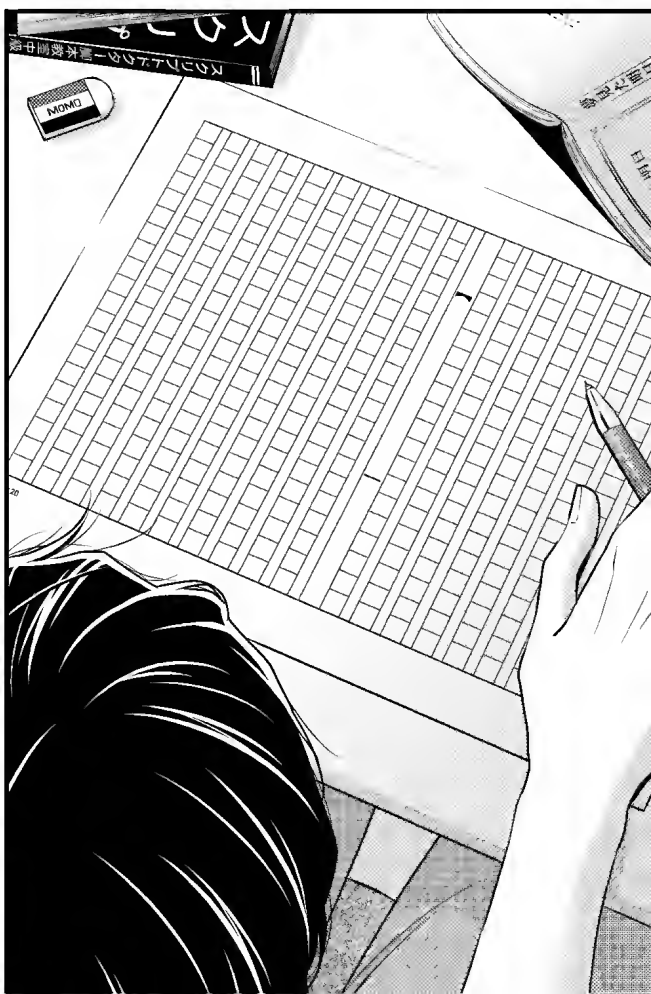
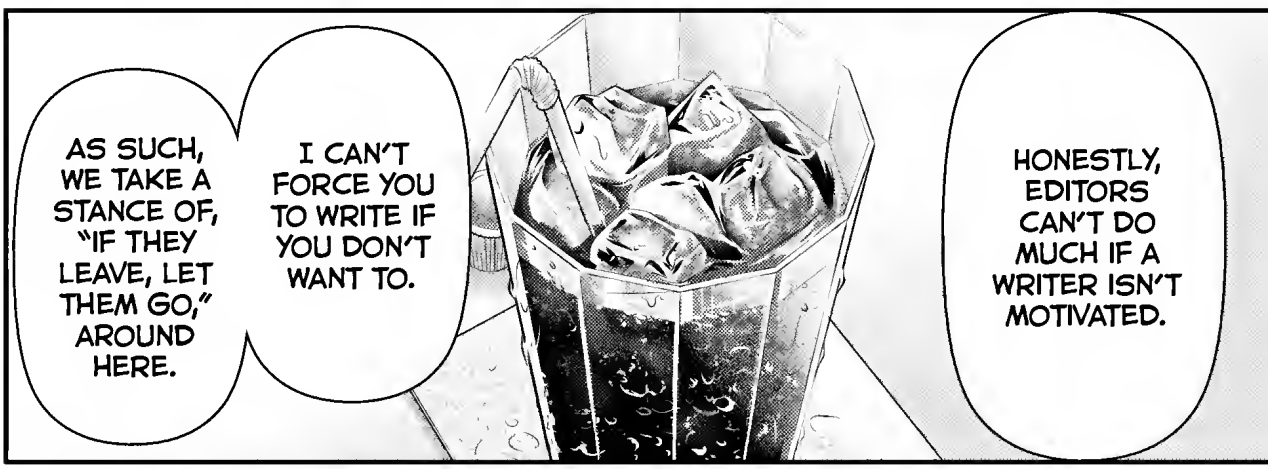

MONO

1 New Message

YOUR ONE-SHOT WAS WELL RECEIVED.
I THOUGHT THAT WITH SUMMER BREAK HERE, YOU'D HAVE A NEW STORY FOR ME RIGHT AWAY, BUT YOU HAVEN'T BEEN IN TOUCH AT ALL.
WRITER'S BLOCK KEEPING YOU DOWN?
I WAS JUST WONDERING HOW YOU WERE DOING.
AT FIRST, I THOUGHT I JUST WASN'T IN THE MOOD...
WHY NOT?
...THE SCENERY I USUALLY ENVISION WHEN I WRITE JUST WON'T COME TO MIND AT ALL.
BUT ...
...AND THAT I'D GET OVER IT EVENTUALLY IF I STARTED WRITING,
FOR SOME REASON ...
...I CAN'T SEEM TO WRITE AT ALL.

I'M NOT SURE WHAT TO DO...
DID SOME-THING HAPPEN ?
...
WELL, I WON'T PRESS YOU IF YOU CAN'T TALK ABOUT IT.
HMM.
JUST NOT IN THE MOOD,
HUH ?


HONESTLY, EDITORS CAN'T DO MUCH IF A WRITER ISN'T MOTIVATED.
I CAN'T FORCE YOU TO WRITE IF YOU DON'T WANT TO.
AS SUCH, WE TAKE A STANCE OF, "IF THEY LEAVE, LET THEM GO," AROUND HERE.

SORRY...

BUT IT'D BE A REAL SHAME TO LOSE YOU...

YEAH ...
I KNOW!
WHY DON'T YOU TRY DOING AN APPREN-TICESHIP OF SORTS?
SINCE IT'S SUMMER BREAK, YOU SHOULD BE FREE, RIGHT?

APPRENTICESHIP?
YEAH, UNDER ANOTHER WRITER.
IT'S BASICALLY LIKE A PART-TIME JOB.
WHO, KIRIYA-SENSEI?
NOPE. KIRIYA-KUN DOESN'T TAKE PUPILS.
HAVE YOU HEARD OF SHIGE-MITSU TOGEN?
!
HERE'S HIS ADDRESS.
HIS REAL NAME IS KURU-MIZAWA-SAN.
I'LL CALL AND TELL HIM YOU'RE COMING.
WELL,
JUST THINK OF IT AS A BREATHER AND STUDY OPPORTUNITY.
...
IS THIS IT?

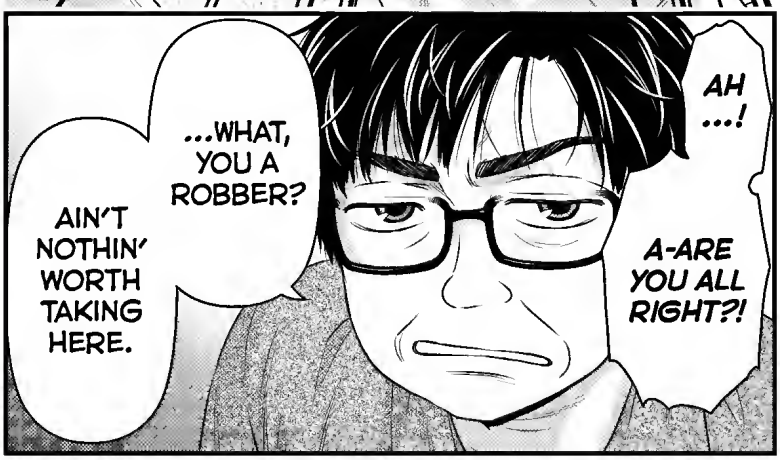
DING DONG
ピンポーン
GRR.
DING DONG
ピンポーン
DING DONG
ピンポーン
OH.
IT'S OPEN ...

WHISH...

...
DING DONG
ピンポーン

I-
I'LL JUST LET MYSELF IN...
WHOA!
THERE'S TRASH EVERY-WHERE!
RATL
EXCUSE ME...
...
HUH ?!
SHIGE-MITSU TOGEN ?!
I'D LIKE TO...
BUT ARE YOU SURE HE'LL TAKE ME?
HE'S DEFINITELY HARD TO PLEASE.
YOU UP FOR IT?
THAT'S RIGHT.
OF COURSE I KNOW HIM. HE WON THE NAOKICHI AWARD!
THEY SAY HE'S NEVER SHOWED UP TO A SINGLE CEREMONY FOR ANY AWARD HE'S WON.
...OR SO HE SAID,
BUT I'M TECH-NICALLY BREAKING THE LAW HE-
HE MIGHT BE MOODY, BUT HE'S NOT A FUSSY GUY.
MEH, SHOULD BE OKAY.
HE PROBABLY WON'T GET MAD IF YOU JUST LET YOURSELF INTO HIS HOUSE.

WAAAH!


AH ...!
A-ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
...WHAT, YOU A ROBBER?
AIN'T NOTHIN' WORTH TAKING HERE.

A P-
PER-SON ...
HE'S ...
A-
AMBU-LANCE!
SKRIT
SKRIT
SKRIT
MRR ...?

TSU-TAYA ?

OH, NO ...
UMM. TSUTAYA-SAN FROM SHINKOSHA SENT ME.
MY NAME IS FUJII...

YES... I'LL BE IN YOUR CARE FOR–
SO,
YOU'RE THE KID WHO HAD A ONE-SHOT IN LAST MONTH'S *BUNGEIKATO*, RIGHT?
OHH!
PAT PAT PAT
RIGHT, RIGHT! LITTLE TSUTAYA!
THAT'S RIGHT, HE CALLED THE OTHER DAY!
PERSONALLY, I DON'T THINK THAT WAS UP TO SNUFF FOR PUBLISHING YET.
FOR STARTERS, THE PROTAGONIST'S CHARACTERIZATION WAS TOO WORDY.
YOU DON'T LEAVE ANY ROOM FOR IMAGINATION IF YOU SPELL EVERYTHING OUT. DON'T TREAT THE READERS LIKE IDIOTS.
AND I DON'T AGREE WITH PUTTING THE GIRL'S MONOLOGUE RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE.
YOU SHOULD'VE SAVED THAT FOR THE VERY END.
IF YOU'RE GONNA WRITE SOMETHING THAT HARMLESS, YOU MIGHT AS WELL GIVE IT A LITTLE PUNCH...
R-
RIGHT!
DON'T WRITE IT DOWN, MEMORIZE IT!

ANY-WAY,
I'M GOIN' BACK TO BED.
TIDY UP THE PLACE, WILL YOU? DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THOROUGH.
AND SORT OUT THE RE-CEIPTS.
バタン!!
THUD
OKAY ...!
...
ガ
SLI
DE
ラッ
OH.
GOOD MORNING.

I SORTED THE RECEIPTS BY MONTH,
SORRY, I STILL HAVE A BIT LEFT TO CLEAN...
I PUT THE LARGE BOOKS IN BOXES.
AND ORGANIZED THE BOOKS BY GENRE.
...SO I HAD TO DO THE HOUSEWORK GROWING UP.
MY MOTHER DIED WHEN I WAS LITTLE ...
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.
HUH ...
I'M GOIN' OUT.
AH ...
...
NOT BAD.
YOU GOOD AT CLEANING OR SOME-THING?

A-
ARE YOU GOING TO GATHER MATERIAL ?!
WELL,
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
WANNA COME?
YES, PLEASE!
SEN-SEEEI! ♥
WELCOME! ♥♥
IF IT AIN'T THE PAR-AMECIUM POSSE. HOW'S IT GOING?
YOU BIG MEAN-IE!
BUT I GUESS IT'S BETTER THAN BEING CALLED MAG-GOTS. ♥
A...
GAY BAR ?!

OH, MY. WHO'S YOUR FRIEND?
H-HELLO...
YOU NEVER BRING YOUNGSTERS AROUND HERE, SENSEI.
WHAT A CUTIE.
I LIKE MY MEN A LITTLE BEEFIER...
CLACK
WHAT'S THIS?
HAVEN'T I SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE?
FWOOF
AH!
WHAT, YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER, GORILLA?
I'M NOT A GORILLA! CALL ME PRINCESS!
UMM... ERIKA-SAN!
I REMEMBER NOW.
YOU'RE THE BOY WHO WAS WITH MARY.
KOBAYASHI-SAN
AKA MARY
WHAT?!
YOU KNOW MARY?!
NOW THAT'S A NAME I HAVEN'T HEARD IN A WHILE! HOW'S SHE DOING?!
CLAMOR

JUST THINK OF IT AS MY SPECIAL CAL*IS! ♥
!

G-GOOD, I THINK ...
WE'LL HAVE TO GIVE YOU THE SPECIAL TREAT-MENT, THEN!
HERE'S A CAL*IS SOUR, ON THE HOUSE! ♥

TLC! TLC!
AAAH!
わっしょーい
HEAVE-HO

THE KID'S IN HIGH SCHOOL, Y'KNOW.
OH, GOD! WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO?!
ホホホ
COUGH COUGH

MMM!

BOOK CLUB BAR
Text Tree
ALL RIGHT!
ONTO THE NEXT PLACE!

WE'LL DRY YOUR PANTS OFF. ♥
TH-THAT'S OKAY...!

夜の蝶
Night Butterfly
WOBL
WOBL
EEK!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
WHUMP
!!
...
HUH?
WHERE...

WHAT ?!
HUH ?!
!
?!
NO WAY ...
WHERE ARE MY CLOTHES ?
WHAT THE HELL ...
...DID I DO LAST NIGHT?!

CHAPTER 99: STYLE

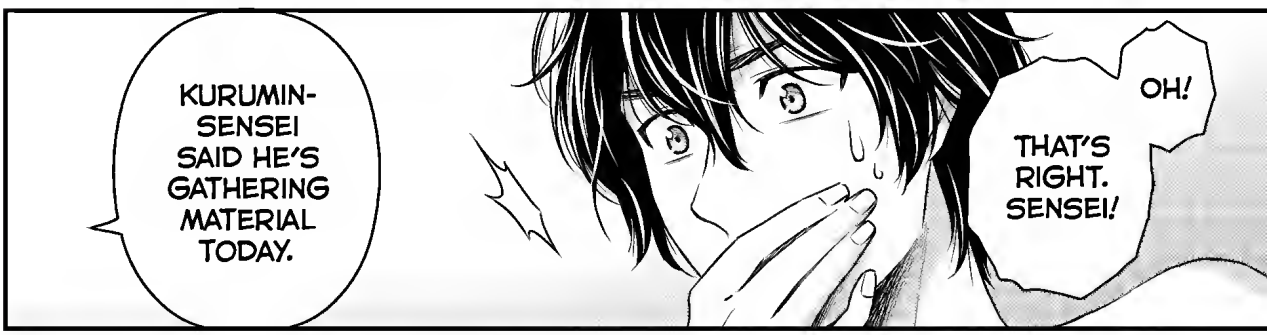
AND WHERE AM I?!
きょろ
GLANCE
きょろ
GLANCE
F-FOR NOW, CLOTHES!
WHERE ARE–
WHO IS SHE ?!
…
ゴクッ
GULP
…
IT'S NO USE. MY MIND'S A BLANK.
THANK GOD...
HOW THE HELL DID THIS HAPPEN?!
A-HA!
JOLT
BVVVV
BVVVV
37 New Messages
ACK!
Menu
LET'S SEE. WHAT TIME IS...
FLICK

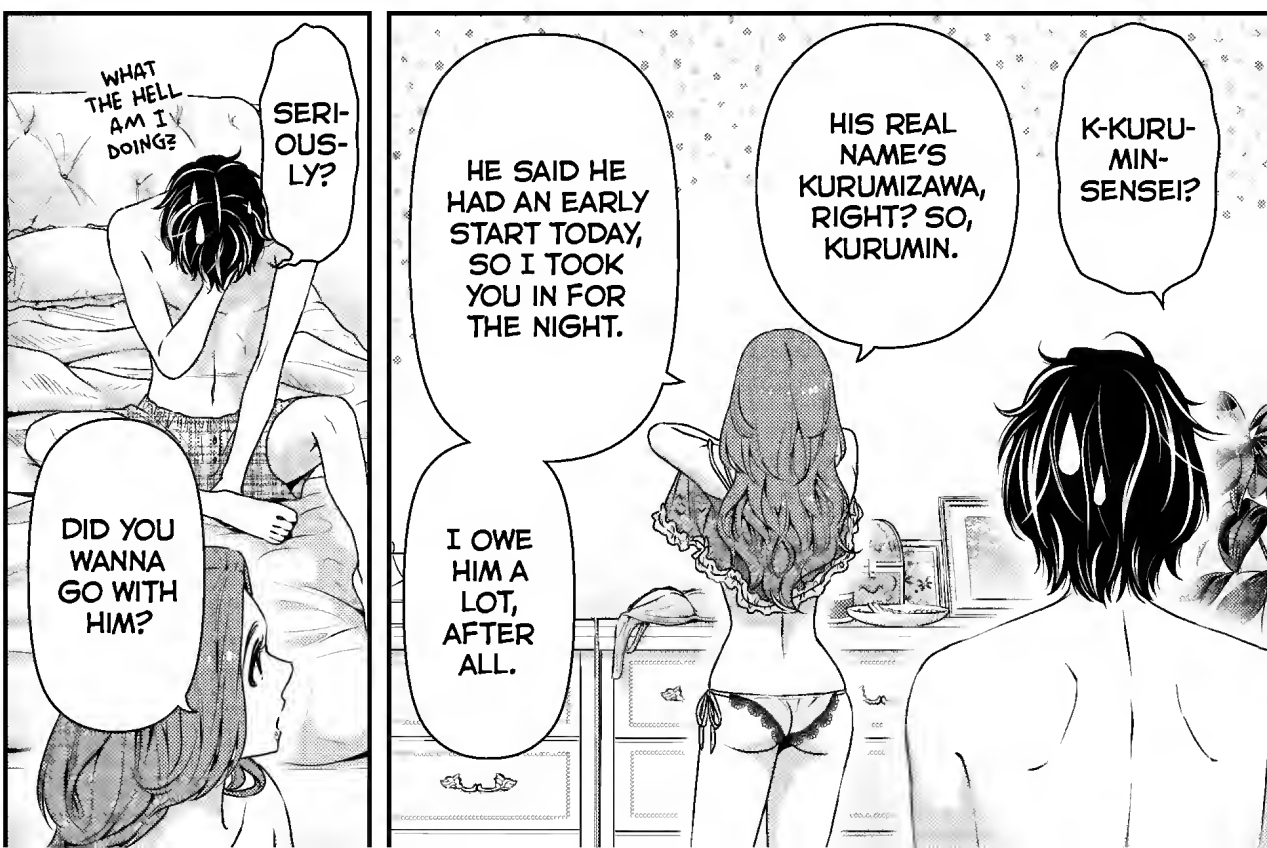
YES?
HELLO?
WHERE ARE YOU?!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING, NATSUO?!
I THOUGHT EVERYTHING WOULD BE FINE, SINCE YOU SAID YOU WERE GOING TO VISIT AN AUTHOR...
BUT YOU'RE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL!
AT LEAST CALL AND LET US KNOW YOU'LL BE SPENDING THE NIGHT!
S-SORRY.
LAST NIGHT WAS A LITTLE CHAOTIC...
SNAP-
YEAH. I'M FINE.
I'LL BE HOME TONIGHT.
SORRY TO MAKE YOU WOR-
AHH! HARDER! ♥
AH!
AH!
I'M COMIIING! ♥

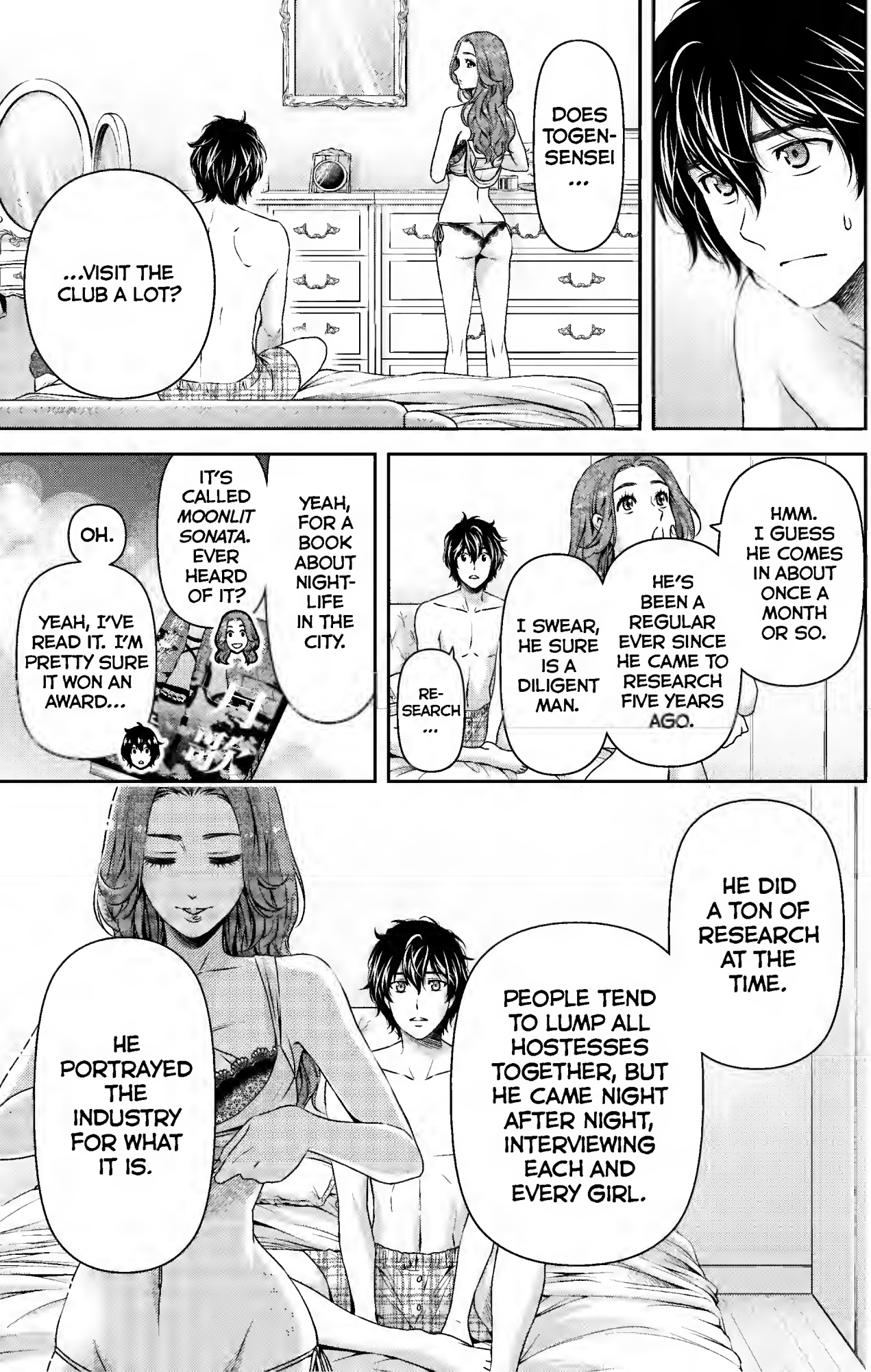
HEY!
WHAT ARE YOU–
PULL
I-IT'S JUST THE TV!
SEE YA!
BOOP
!
WHO WAS THAT, NATSUO ?!
ARE YOU WITH A WOMAN ?!
AHH!
DON'T STOP! FASTER-RR! ♥
!
POMF
WANNA PICK UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF...
...LAST NIGHT?

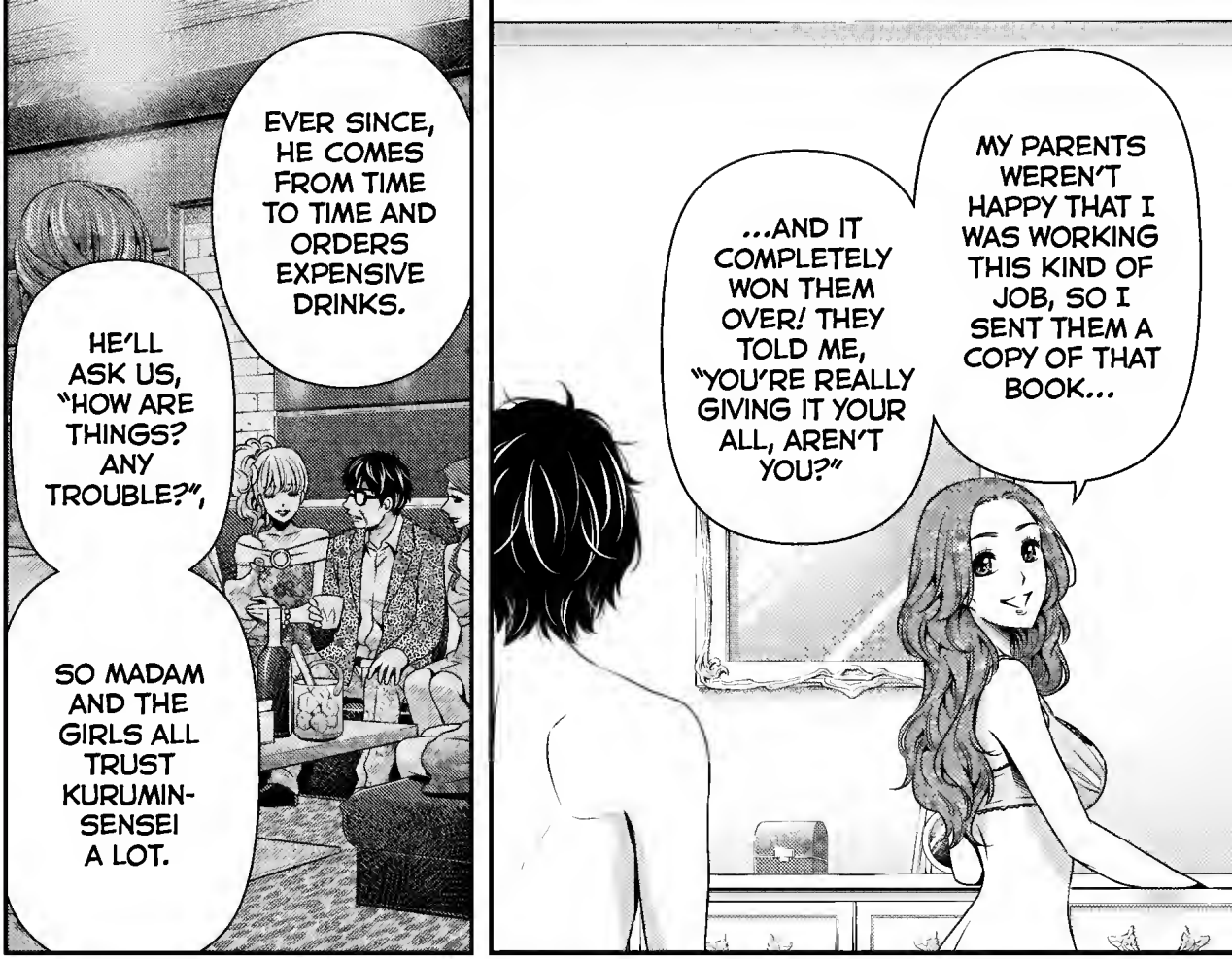
...DID WE REALLY, UMM...
...DO IT?
...
SO ...
...!
...BUT I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING FROM LAST NIGHT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW I SHOULD MAKE UP FOR THIS...
AS A MAN, IT'S KINDA PATHETIC...
FOR ME TO SAY THIS...
?!
JUST KIDDING. NOTHING HAPPENED.
YOU WERE OUT LIKE A LIGHT.
AH, HA, HA, HA! HOW CUTE!
LOOK AT YOU, MR. SERIOUS!
PHEEEW
THANK GOD...
YOU PASSED OUT DRUNK AT THE CLUB, SO I BROUGHT YOU HOME AND TOOK CARE OF YOU.
YOU DON'T RE-MEM-BER?

NOT ONE BIT...
I VAGUELY REMEMBER THAT WE WENT TO A HOSTESS CLUB, BUT...
DON'T TELL ME I STRIPPED IN THE STORE.
NO, YOU JUST PUKED.
WE HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE A MINOR.
SO, I HAD THE CHAUFFEUR BRING YOU BACK HERE AND HELP TAKE OFF YOUR PUKE-STAINED CLOTHES.
THEN, I GOT TIRED AFTER WASHING THEM AND FELL ASLEEP.
I WAS PRETTY DRUNK, TOO, SO I MIGHT'VE PLAYED WITH YOUR BODY A LITTLE.
SORRY IF I DID!


OH!
THAT'S RIGHT. SENSEI!
KURUMIN-SENSEI SAID HE'S GATHERING MATERIAL TODAY.


K-KURUMIN-SENSEI?
HIS REAL NAME'S KURUMIZAWA, RIGHT? SO, KURUMIN.
HE SAID HE HAD AN EARLY START TODAY, SO I TOOK YOU IN FOR THE NIGHT.
I OWE HIM A LOT, AFTER ALL.
SERI-OUS-LY?
WHAT THE HELL AM I DOING?
DID YOU WANNA GO WITH HIM?


DOES TOGEN-SENSEI ...
...VISIT THE CLUB A LOT?
HMM. I GUESS HE COMES IN ABOUT ONCE A MONTH OR SO.
HE'S BEEN A REGULAR EVER SINCE HE CAME TO RESEARCH FIVE YEARS AGO.
I SWEAR, HE SURE IS A DILIGENT MAN.
RE-SEARCH ...
YEAH, FOR A BOOK ABOUT NIGHT-LIFE IN THE CITY.
IT'S CALLED *MOONLIT SONATA*. EVER HEARD OF IT?
OH.
YEAH, I'VE READ IT. I'M PRETTY SURE IT WON AN AWARD...
HE DID A TON OF RESEARCH AT THE TIME.
PEOPLE TEND TO LUMP ALL HOSTESSES TOGETHER, BUT HE CAME NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, INTERVIEWING EACH AND EVERY GIRL.
HE PORTRAYED THE INDUSTRY FOR WHAT IT IS.


MY PARENTS WEREN'T HAPPY THAT I WAS WORKING THIS KIND OF JOB, SO I SENT THEM A COPY OF THAT BOOK...
...AND IT COMPLETELY WON THEM OVER! THEY TOLD ME, "YOU'RE REALLY GIVING IT YOUR ALL, AREN'T YOU?"
EVER SINCE, HE COMES FROM TIME TO TIME AND ORDERS EXPENSIVE DRINKS.
HE'LL ASK US, "HOW ARE THINGS? ANY TROUBLE?",
SO MADAM AND THE GIRLS ALL TRUST KURUMIN-SENSEI A LOT.

I WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED...
IF IT'S LIKE THAT AT A LOT OF PLACES HE GOES FOR MATERIAL.

YOU ...
FWIP
I'M SORRY ABOUT LAST NIGHT!
EVEN THOUGH YOU LET ME TAG ALONG...
I ENDED UP CAUSING YOU A LOT OF TROUBLE!
EVERYTHING OKAY LAST NIGHT?
YES. ONE OF THE HOSTESSES TOOK CARE OF ME...
YOU COULD'VE JUST GONE HOME, Y'KNOW.

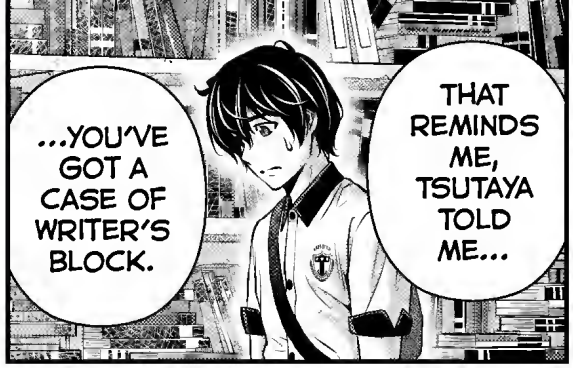
IT'S ALL RIGHT! I LET MY FAMILY KNOW WHERE I AM!
MY DAD GAVE ME HELL WHEN I WOKE UP THIS MORNING.
HE TOLD ME TO AT LEAST CALL BEFORE I STAY OUT...
...
GOOD FATHER YOU GOT THERE.
I'M SURPRISED YOU CAME BACK AFTER WHAT YOU WENT THROUGH LAST NIGHT.
EXCUSE ME! I'M WITH GREEN HAT DELIVERY!
KURU-MIZAWA-SAN, I PRE-SUME?
PARDON ME. THE TRUCK WON'T FIT THROUGH THIS ALLEY.
IS IT ALL RIGHT IF I BRING YOUR PACKAGES ON A DOLLY?
SURE.
THANKS.
DID YOU BUY SOME-THING?
YEAH, JUST SOME BOOKS.
BA-
DOOM
"SOME?"
CARRY 'EM TO THE STUDY, WILL YOU?

HUP ...
'SCUSE MEEE.
IT'S ROUGH TO BE A WRITER ONCE YOU THROW YOUR BACK OUT.
CAREFUL WITH THAT.
OKAY...
YEAH.
JUST ABOUT.
CHIK
ARE ALL OF THESE FOR REFER-ENCE?
WOW ...

I WENT AHEAD AND READ YOUR ONE-SHOT,
AS WELL AS YOUR LITERARY AWARD PIECE.
A LADY FROM THE CLUB TOLD ME YOU'RE VERY METICULOUS ABOUT INTER-VIEWS AND GATHERING MATERIAL,
BUT YOU'VE GOT AN INSANE AMOUNT OF REFERENCE, TOO.
CAN YOU ONLY WRITE ABOUT THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN YOUR OWN LITTLE BUBBLE?
THERE ARE WORLDS I WANT TO PORTRAY.
THINGS I WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW ABOUT.
IN ORDER TO MAKE SOMETHING THAT RESO-NATES WITH THE READER DEEPLY...
I CAN'T GO DOING THINGS HALF-ASSED.
...!
THE ONLY PARTS ABOUT YOUR WORK THAT FELT REALISTIC WERE THE MAIN CHARACTERS' INTERNAL MONOLOGUE.

TAP
PLUS, IT'S TO EXPAND MY WORLD.
IMAGINATION IS IMPERATIVE FOR WRITING.
BUT THE POTENTIAL OF YOUR IMAGINATION IS LIMITED BY YOUR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.
DOING RESEARCH, VISITING PLACES, AND LISTENING TO PEOPLE WILL BROADEN THE WORLD YOU WANT TO WRITE ABOUT.
EVERYTHING YOU CREATE WILL FEEL CLAUSTROPHOBIC IF YOU STAY INSIDE YOUR BUBBLE.

ATMOSPHERE, TENSION.
EVEN HUMAN INTERACTION.
THERE ARE PLENTY OF THINGS THAT HAPPEN IN REAL LIFE THAT GO BEYOND IMAGINATION.


...YOU'VE GOT A CASE OF WRITER'S BLOCK.
THAT REMINDS ME, TSUTAYA TOLD ME...

BUT IF YOU KEEP DOING THINGS THE WAY YOU HAVE BEEN...
I'M NOT TELLIN' YOU TO BE LIKE ME OR ANYTHING,

WE DON'T WANT TO BURY REALITY IN PREJUDICE AND LIES.
AND THAT'S WHY WE DO RE-SEARCH.

...YOUR WELL MIGHT DRY UP BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.

I'M HOME ...

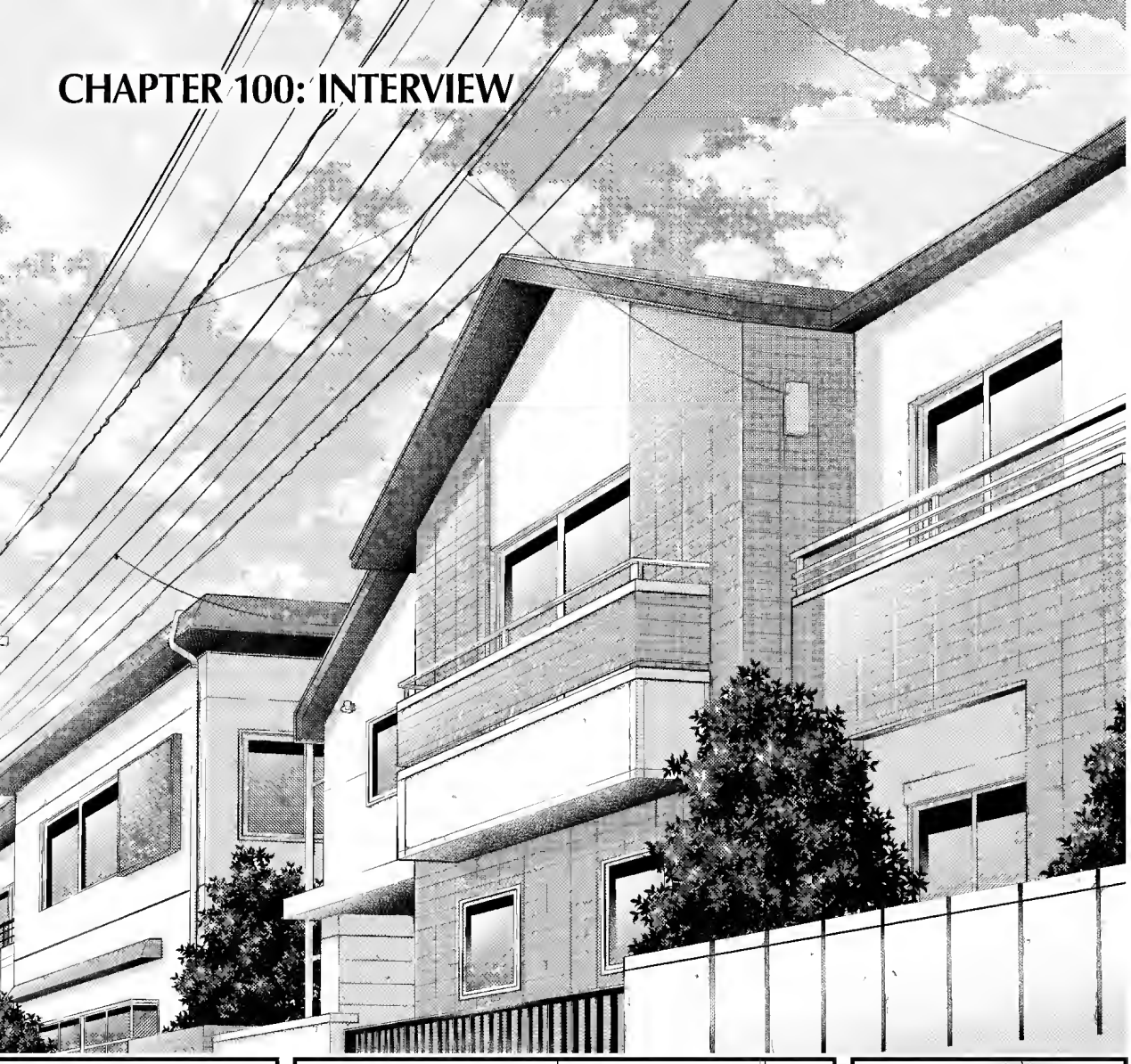
WIPED
...YOU'RE BACK.
YEAH ...
DAD JUST GOT DONE CHEWING MY ASS OUT...
OH...
HEY...
HM?
DID YOU DROP THIS?
HUH ?
WHY DIDN'T YOU ANSWER YOUR PHO-
AAAH! HA, HA, HA!
SWIPE
THIS, UHH, ISN'T WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE!
!
GIRL CLUB
宵の蝶
Night Butterfly
樹里
JU RI
TEL XXX-XXXX-XXXX
E-mail:XXXX@XXX.XX
LINE ID:XXXX
Come back when you're an adult.

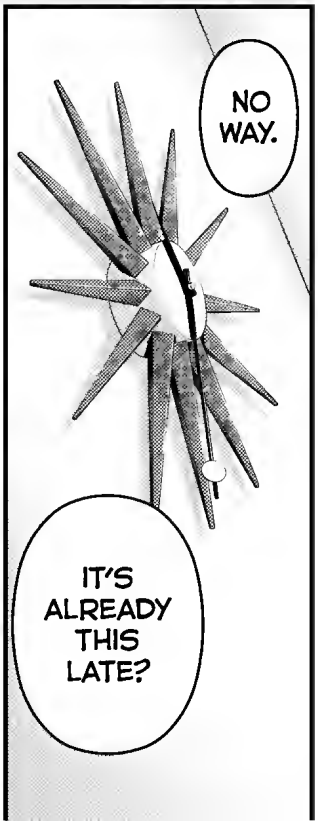
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DEFEND YOURSELF.
ERR, WELL...
MORE LIKE I WAS *DRAGGED* TO ONE! IT'S NOT LIKE I WANTED TO GO...!
YOU WENT TO A HOSTESS CLUB?
OH...
OKAY ...
IT'S ...
...NONE OF MY BUSINESS, ANYWAY.
I'M GONNA TAKE A BATH.
YOU SAID YOU DID RESEARCH FOR THAT, RIGHT?
REMEMBER THE STORY YOU WON AN AWARD WITH LAST FALL?
WHAT KIND?
H-
HEY ...!

I WOULDN'T CALL IT RE-SEARCH.
...
I JUST...
...ASKED L'AMANT'S OWNER SOME STUFF.
KOBA-YASHI-SAN?
HUH. I SEE ...
SPSH
10

Alex
Hi, Rui-chan!
We're meeting at
11 tomorrow, right?
I'm so excited,
I might not get any
sleep tonight!

CHAPTER 100: INTERVIEW





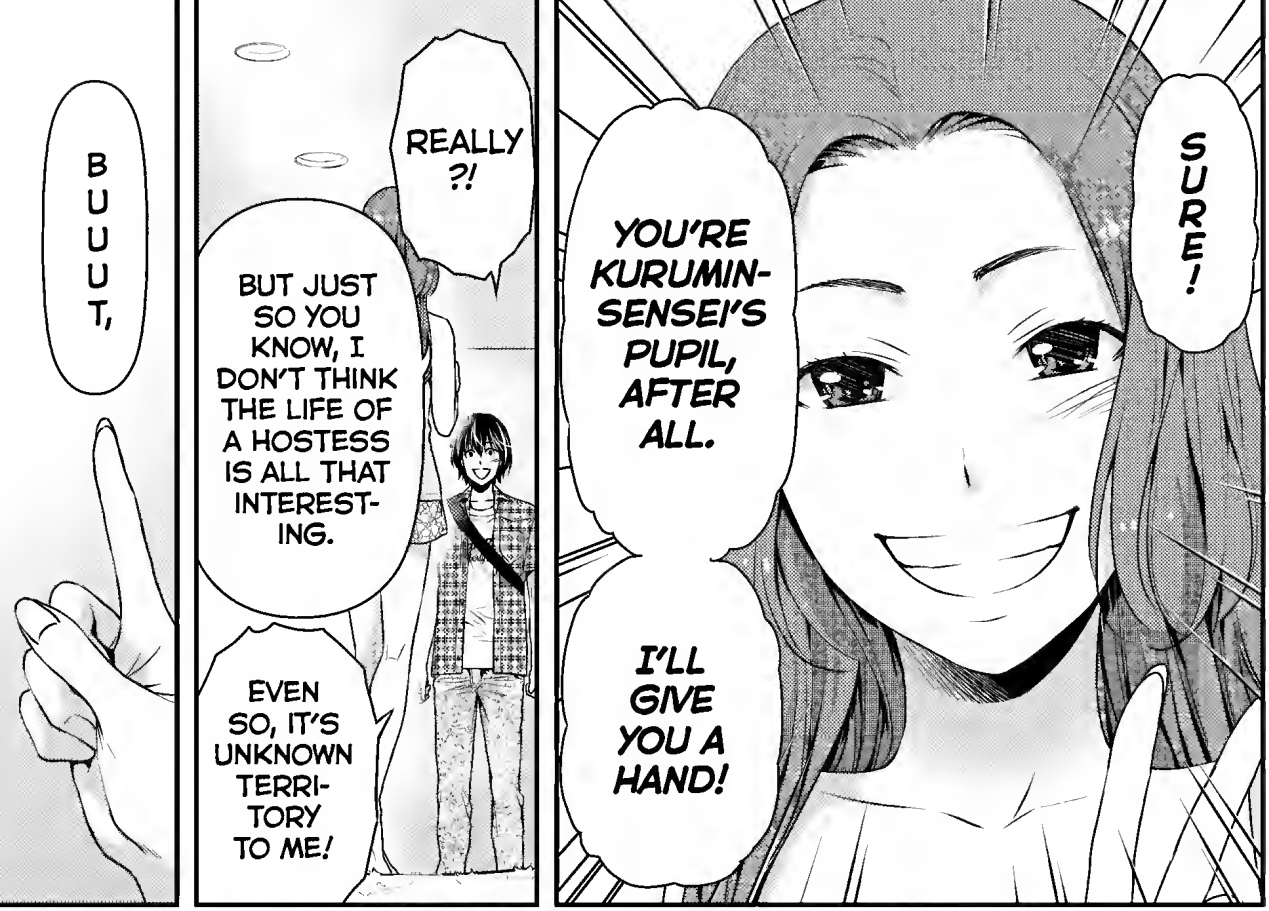
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
SURE ...
OKAY.
SEE YOU LATER.
THUD
IT'S ...
...NONE OF MY BUSINESS.
QUIT MOPING AROUND!
IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT!
SLAP

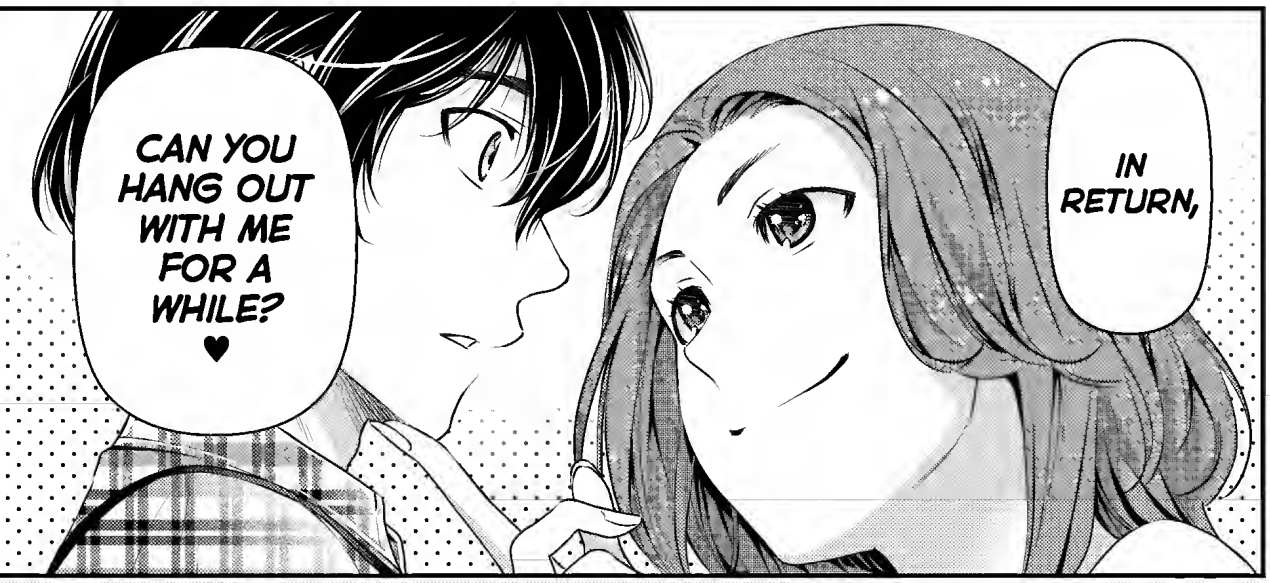
ピンポーン
DING DONG
SENSEI!
IT'S FUJII!
I'M COMING IN.
TOGEN-SENSEI!
HUH? IS HE OU-
ビクッ
TWITCH
SENSEI!
IT'S ALREADY PAST NOON!
MUH?
YOU'RE GOING TO GET HEAT STROKE IF YOU SLEEP ON THE FLOOR WITHOUT THE AC ON!
SENSEI...
CAN HE ONLY SLEEP LIKE A CORPSE OR WHAT?
OH, IT'S YOU...
GOOD MORNING.
DO YOU ALWAYS SLEEP LIKE THIS?
I WAS READING UNTIL MORNING AND JUST CONKED OUT.
PRETTY MUCH.
ANYTHING ON THE AGENDA TODAY?
AGENDA?

OHH...
WORK, HUH?
I DON'T HAVE ANY INTERVIEWS LINED UP, AND I ALREADY HAD YOU CLEAN UP...
I CAN'T THINK OF MUCH.
YOU'RE FREE TO DO WHAT YOU WANT.
FREE,
HUH?
I KNOW.
WHY DON'T YOU GO GATHER SOME MATERIAL OF YOUR OWN?
PICK A SUBJECT.
THIS TOWN'S FULL OF THINGS YOU CAN USE IN A STORY.
THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT.
A RESEARCH SUBJECT,
HUH?
BUT I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY CONNECTIONS...
RSTL
RSTL
RSTL

GIRL CLUB
宵の蝶
Night Butterfly
樹里
JU RI
TEL XXX-X
E-mail:XX
LINE ID:XX
HEEEY!
♥
WHAT'S UP? I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO CALL SO SOON.
?!
S-
SORRY, I THINK I HAVE THE WRONG PERSON.
TAP
スタ
NOPE, YOU'RE RIGHT.
S-SORRY ...
C'MON! I'M JUST NOT WEARING MAKEUP!
NOOG
WELL, I DID FALL ASLEEP IN FULL MAKEUP LAST NIGHT.

SORRY TO CALL YOU OUT OF THE BLUE.
NO SWEAT. IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I WOKE UP TO A YOUNG MAN'S VOICE.
YOU SAID YOU HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK?
JUST TO BE CLEAR, I WON'T SCORE YOU BOOZE OR ANY-THING.
I'M ACTUALLY TRYING TO BECOME A NOVELIST,
AND I'M STUDYING UNDER TOGEN-SENSEI AT THE MOMENT.
IS THERE ANY CHANCE ...
...YOU'D LET ME INTERVIEW YOU, JURI-SAN?
INTER-VIEW ME?
YES, FOR A STORY.
I'VE ALWAYS WRITTEN IN MY OWN STYLE UNTIL NOW,
BUT I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO WRITE AT ALL LATELY.
SENSEI SUGGESTED THAT I DO RESEARCH TO BROADEN MY HORI-ZONS.
SO, I THOUGHT I'D LEARN ABOUT YOU, SOMEONE WHO LIVES IN A WORLD I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT.
THAT IS, IF YOU'LL LET ME ...


BUUUT,
REALLY ?!
BUT JUST SO YOU KNOW, I DON'T THINK THE LIFE OF A HOSTESS IS ALL THAT INTEREST-ING.
EVEN SO, IT'S UNKNOWN TERRI-TORY TO ME!
YOU'RE KURUMIN-SENSEI'S PUPIL, AFTER ALL.
I'LL GIVE YOU A HAND!
SURE!


CAN YOU HANG OUT WITH ME FOR A WHILE? ♥
IN RETURN,

YOU'RE BUYING MORE?
WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED.
I HAVEN'T GONE SHOPPING IN FOREVER!
AH!
A NEW BAG'S OUT!
WHAAAT? IT'S SO CUTE! ♥
I BET IT'D GO WITH ANYTHING!
CUSTOMERS SOMETIMES BUY ME PRESENTS WHEN WE GO ON DAY DATES,
BUT IT'S NOT AS SATISFYING AS BUYING SOMETHING WITH YOUR OWN MONEY.
AREN'T HIGH-SCHOOLERS THESE DAYS PICKY ABOUT CLOTHES?
NAH, I'M PRETTY CASUAL ABOUT SHOPPING.
WHAAAT?! HIGH SCHOOL'S A GREAT TIME TO GET INTO FASHION!
I KNOW!
I'LL PICK OUT AN OUTFIT FOR YOU!
YEAH, LET'S DO THAT!
FWIP
HUH?! ARE YOU SURE...?
DON'T HOLD BACK! I INSIST! ♪

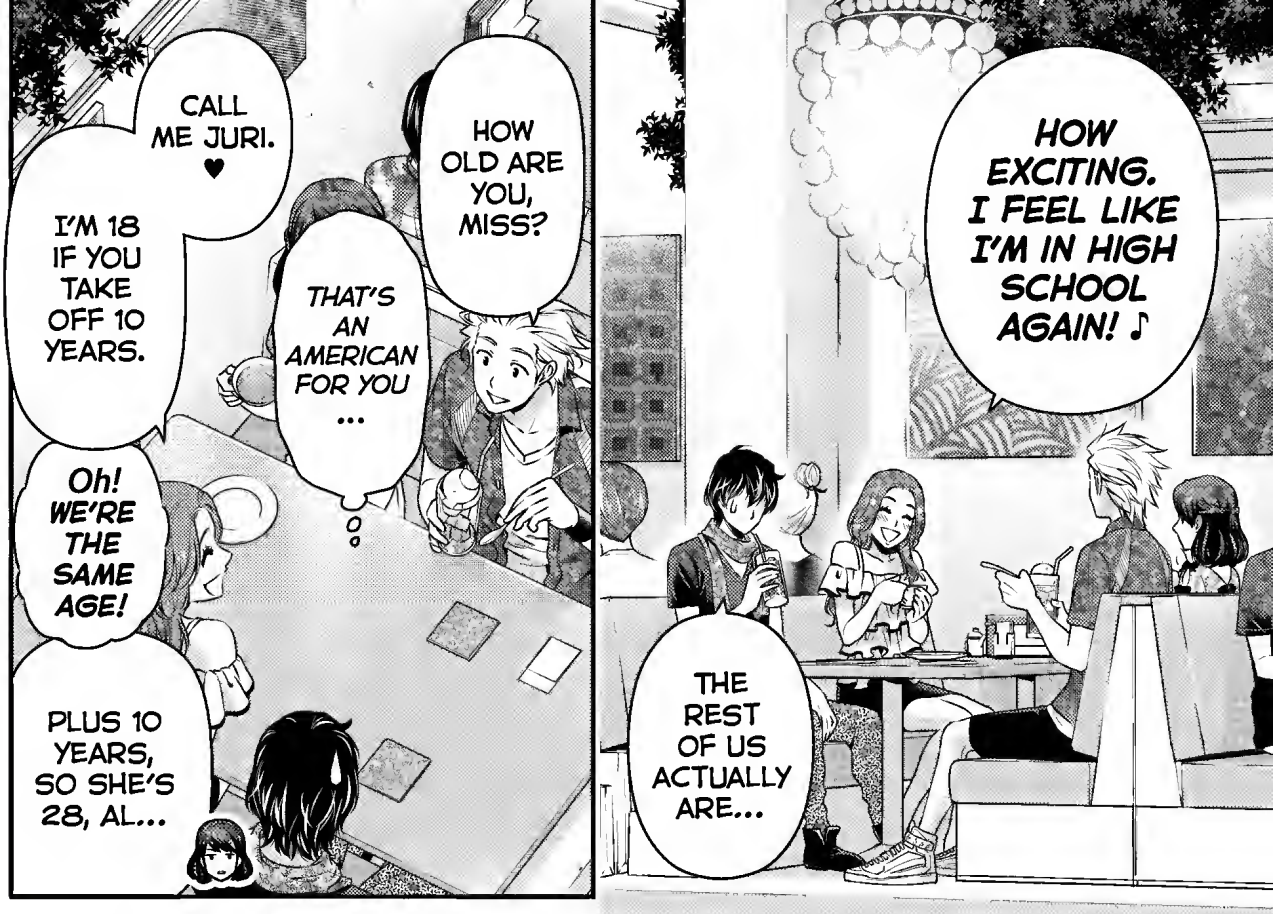
I FEEL KINDA ...
...ANXIOUS WEARING THIS.
HMM.
NOT TOO SHABBY.
M&
HUH ?
NAT-CHAN ?
HUH ?!
ARE YOU REALLY SURE ABOUT THIS?
WE'LL TAKE EVERY-THING.
YOU'LL GET USED TO IT!
WHA—
IT'S FIIINE! YOU CAN JUST PAY ME BACK WHEN YOU MAKE IT BIG! ♪

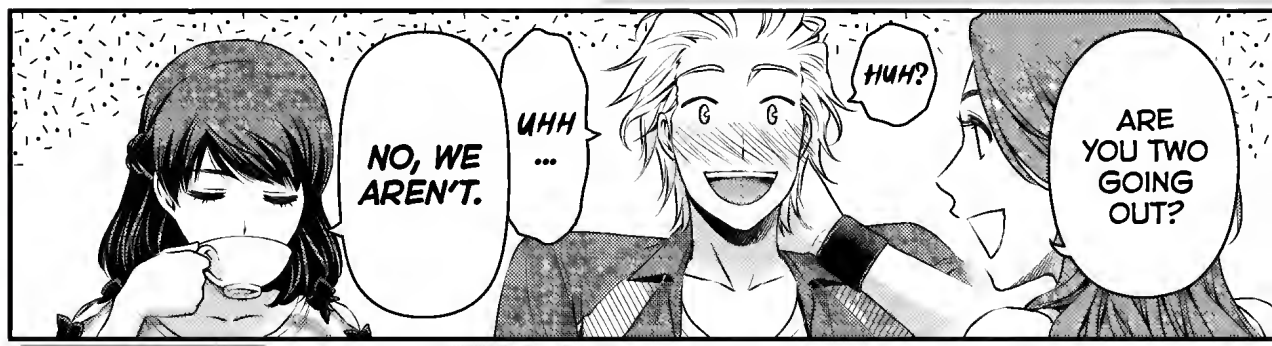
RUI!
AL ...!
OH, ARE THEY FRIENDS OF YOURS?
UHH ...
THIS IS MY STEP-SISTER AND A FRIEND FROM SCHOOL.
COOL!
WHO'S THIS, NAT-CHAN?

SHE'S ...
ME? I'M JUST ...
...THE WOMAN WHO BOUGHT HIM FOR A DAY.
SNAP

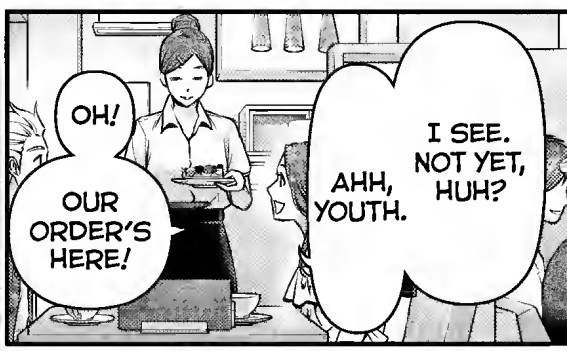
WH-WHAT? NO!
OH, AM I WRONG ?
THE DEAL WAS I TAG ALONG WITH YOU IN EXCHANGE FOR AN INTERVIEW...
WELL, WE'LL JUST BE GOING NOW.
LET'S GO, AL.
HEY, WHY DON'T WE ALL GET COFFEE OR SOME-THING?!
WE CAN CALL IT A DOUBLE DATE!

HUH? I'D RATHER NOT.
AWW, C'MON! IT'LL BE FUN!
NO, THANK YOU!
AHH...
I SEE.
THE HOTEL DISTRICT'S JUST UP AHEAD.
YOU TWO ARE IN A RUSH TO GET THERE, RIGHT?
SORRY TO KEEP YOU!
...
THEN, WHY DON'T YOU JOIN US FOR COFFEE?
W-WE'RE NOT GOING TO A HOTEL!


HOW EXCITING. I FEEL LIKE I'M IN HIGH SCHOOL AGAIN! ♪
THE REST OF US ACTUALLY ARE...
HOW OLD ARE YOU, MISS?
THAT'S AN AMERICAN FOR YOU ...
CALL ME JURI. ♥
I'M 18 IF YOU TAKE OFF 10 YEARS.
Oh! WE'RE THE SAME AGE!
PLUS 10 YEARS, SO SHE'S 28, AL...

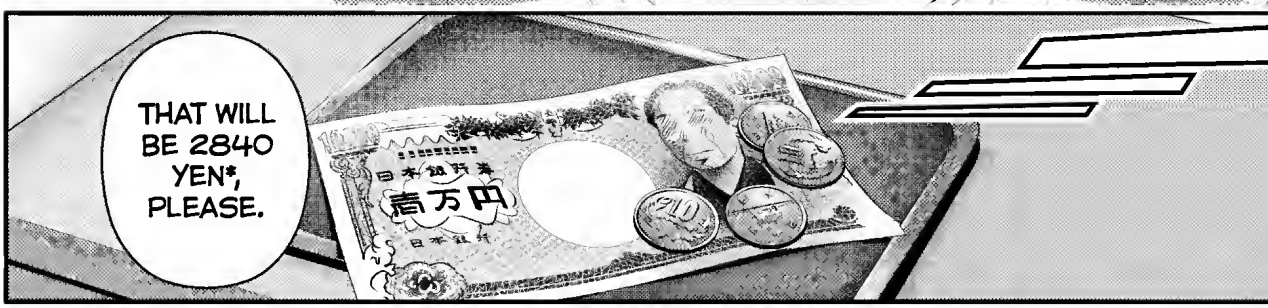

ARE YOU TWO GOING OUT?
HUH?
UHH ...
NO, WE AREN'T.

HERE.
SAY AHH.


I SEE. NOT YET, HUH?
AHH, YOUTH.
OH! OUR ORDER'S HERE!

THIS TART IS SOOO GOOD. ♪

I CAN FEED MYSELF ...
SWIF
DON'T BE LIKE THAT.
HEY ...!
AHH. ♥
WHAT'S THE PROB-LEM?
WE SPENT THE NIGHT IN THE SAME BED, AFTER ALL.
ERR ...
THE SAME BED?!
...!
I-IT'S NOT WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE!
OH, I'D SAY IT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE.
DID YOU MAKE LOVE WITH JURI-SAN, NAT-CHAN ?!
GRSH
DAMN IT, AL. DON'T SAY THA–



*APPROX. 28 USD.

WHY ARE YOU POUTING, RUI-CHAN?
I'M NOT.
...
GAME
OH, YOU'RE TOGEN-SENSEI'S PUPIL. JURI-SAN SAID YOU'D BE JOINING US THIS EVENING.
THANKS FOR HAVING ME...
GIRL CLUB
宵の蝶
Night Butterfly
CLACK
カチャ
WE WON'T WORK YOU TOO HARD.
OBSERVE TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT.

WOW ...
SHE LOOKS EVEN PRETTIER IN A DRESS.
SHE'S CONSISTENTLY ONE OF OUR TOP-RANKING HOSTESSES, AFTER ALL.
BUT IT'S NOT JUST HER LOOKS.
PERHAPS YOU CAN CALL IT INTUITION.
SHE CAN ASSESS EVERY CUSTOMER'S TASTES AND PERSONALITY ...
...AND TAILORS HER APPROACH TO THEIR LIKING.
TO SOME, SHE ACTS LIKE A CHILDHOOD FRIEND, TO OTHERS, LIKE A YOUNGER SISTER.
SHE ACTS IN A WAY THAT WILL BEST PLEASE HER CUSTOMERS.
IT'S REALLY SOMETHING ELSE.

DON'T SCREW WITH ME!
ONE OF MY EMPLOYEES SAID HE SAW YOU WALKIN' AROUND SHIBUYA...
...WITH A GUY ON YOUR ARM!
I'M TELLING YOU, HE'S LIKE A LITTLE BROTHER TO ME...
SHUT THE HELL UP!
GRAB
HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU THINK I'VE DUMPED ON YOU?!
SPLSHHH
DAMN BITCH!
PLEASE STOP THAT, NISHIEDA-SAMA!
EEK!
PLEASE DON'T SAY THAT, NISHIEDA-SAN.
PROFANITY DOESN'T SUIT YOU.
SMILE

I GUESS THERE ARE BAD CUSTOMERS, TOO...
THEY'RE DRUNK, AFTER ALL.
IT HAPPENS.

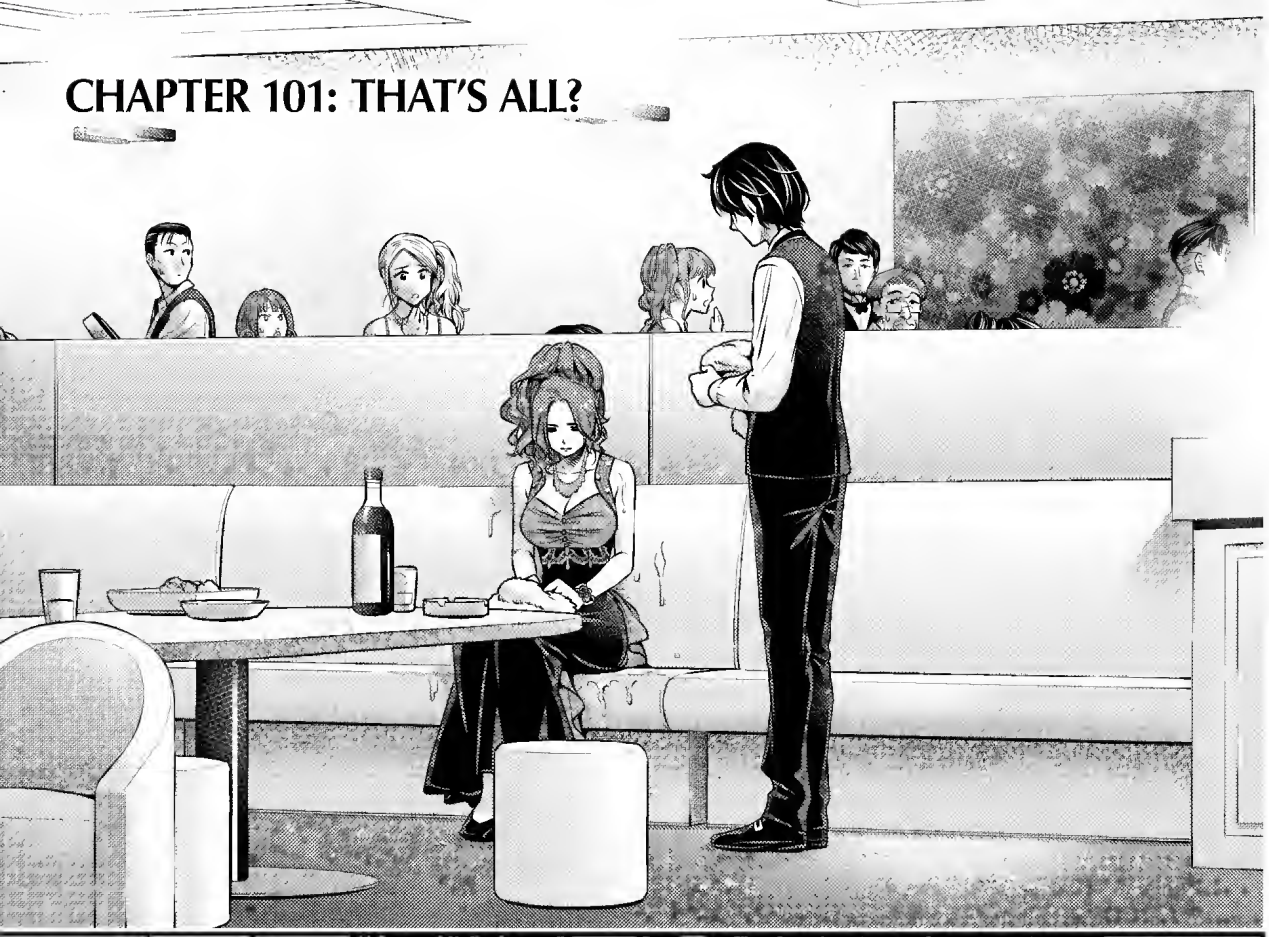
MY APOLOGIES, NISHIEDA-SAMA, BUT I MUST ASK YOU TO JOIN US IN THE OFFICE.
LEMME GO, YA JACK-ASSES!
A-
ARE YOU OKAY ?!

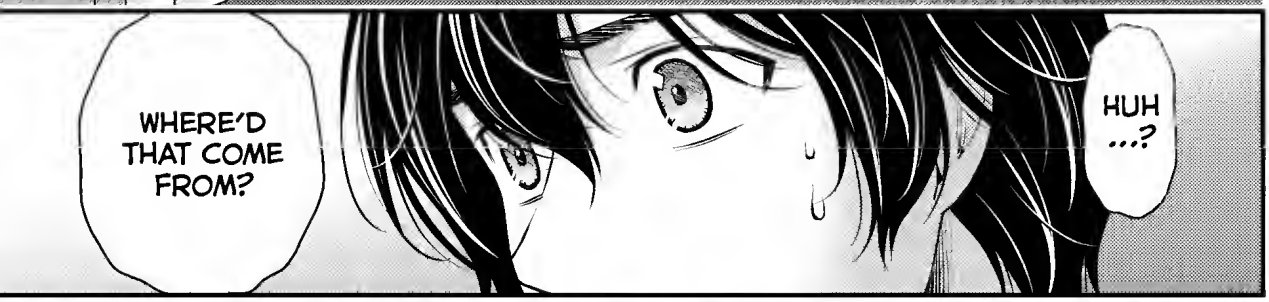
Y'KNOW, I WAS SURPRISED BY HOW PROFES-SIONALLY YOU HANDLED THAT.
DESPITE HAVING A DRINK POURED ON YOU,
YOU WERE ABLE TO SMILE IN A WAY THAT WOULDN'T OFFEND HIM.

YOU PUT ACTRESSES TO SHAME!

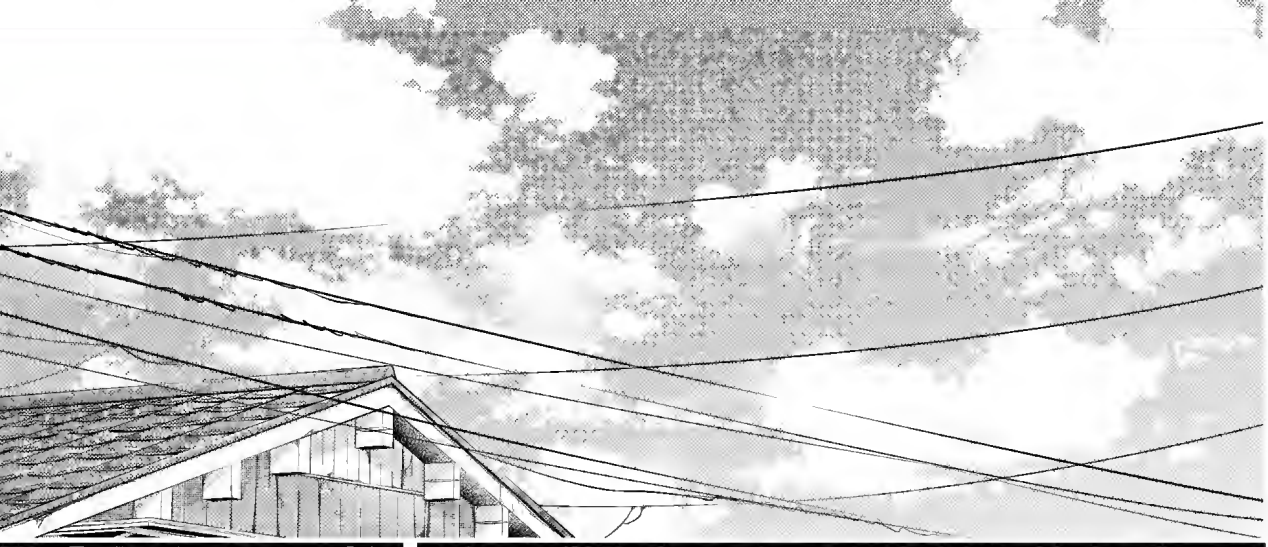
...
HEY, NATSUO-KUN.
SORRY, BUT IS IT OKAY...
...IF WE DROP THE WHOLE INTERVIEW THING?

CHAPTER 101: THAT'S ALL?



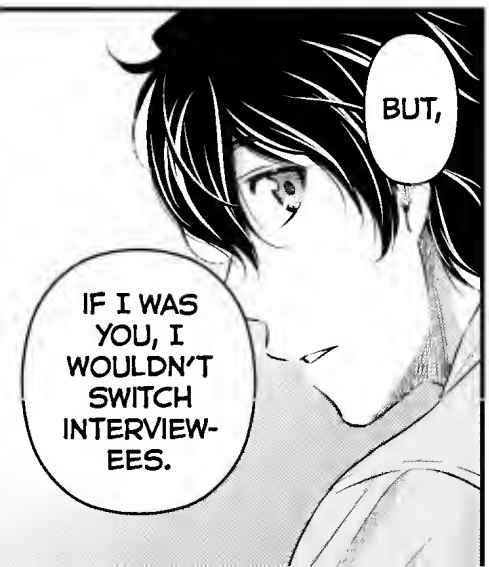


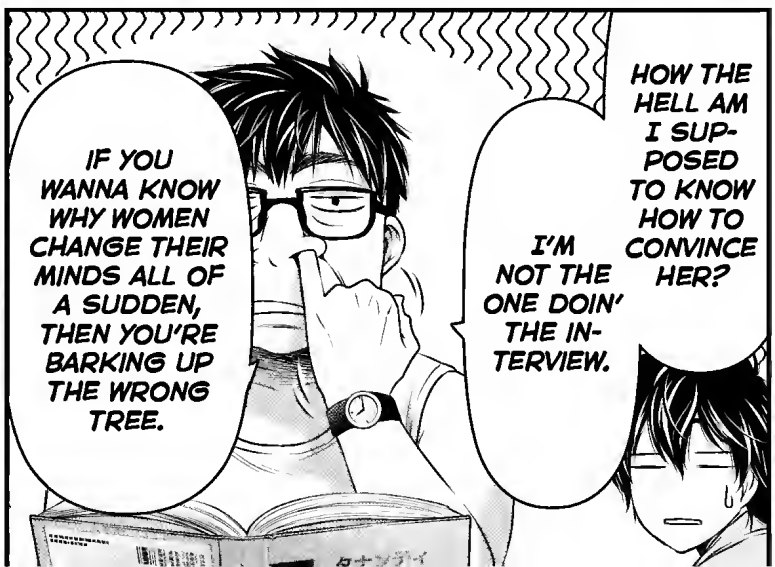
?!
I WANTED TO SHOW OFF FOR YOU...
...BUT I ENDED UP LOOKING PRETTY PATHETIC.
DON'T SAY THAT...
YOU SAID I WAS VERY PROFES-SIONAL,
BUT A REAL PRO WOULD'VE CALMED DOWN THE CUSTOMER BEFORE THIS HAPPENED.
BUT EVEN WITH THOSE ASPECTS INCLUDED, I...
I DON'T WANT TO DO IT.
IT'S A LOT OF PRESSURE TO THINK, "IS HE GOING TO WRITE ABOUT THIS, TOO?"
IT WAS ONE THING WHEN KURUMIN-SENSEI CAME, SINCE ALL WE DID WAS TALK.
BUT I DON'T THINK I'M SUITED FOR UP-CLOSE-AND-PERSONAL INTERVIEWS.
IF YOU REALLY WANT TO LEARN ABOUT THE INDUSTRY ...
...I CAN INTRO-DUCE YOU TO SOME OF THE OTHER GIRLS, OKAY?
SORRY.



I WENT HOME AFTER HELPING AROUND THE CLUB,
BUT I'M NOT SURE WHAT I SHOULD DO.
WHAT DO YOU THINK, SENSEI?

...AND THAT WAS IT.
SHE SUDDENLY BACKED OUT OF THE INTERVIEW.


BUT,
IF I WAS YOU, I WOULDN'T SWITCH INTERVIEW-EES.


HOW THE HELL AM I SUP-POSED TO KNOW HOW TO CONVINCE HER?
I'M NOT THE ONE DOIN' THE IN-TERVIEW.
IF YOU WANNA KNOW WHY WOMEN CHANGE THEIR MINDS ALL OF A SUDDEN, THEN YOU'RE BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE.

TREA-
SURE
?
MATERIAL THAT'LL GIVE YOU INSIGHT ON HUMAN NATURE.
PEOPLE WITH SECRETS TEND TO HAVE THE MOST DRAMA.
...MEANS THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THERE'S TREASURE INSIDE.
THE FACT THAT SHE SHUT THE DOOR ON YOU ALL OF A SUDDEN ...

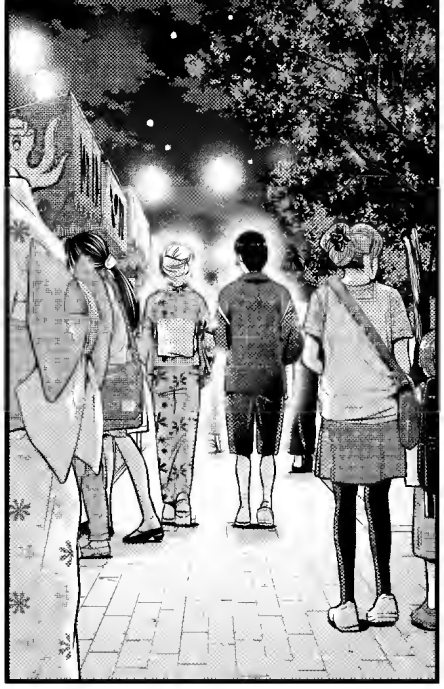
...IS UP TO THE SKILL OF THE INTER-VIEWER.
AND EXTRACT THE GOOD STUFF ...
HOW YOU DIG THROUGH TO THE VAULT,

KEEP THOSE HANDS MOVING.
OKAY ...
SO YOU'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME TO THINK.
WELL, AT ANY RATE, I'M NOT LETTING YOU GO HOME UNTIL YOU FINISH FILING THOSE DOCUMENTS,

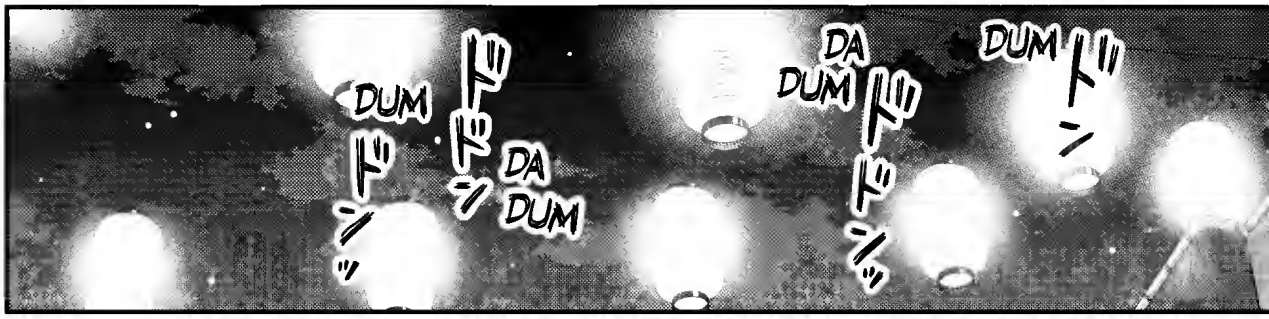
HOW TO DIG THROUGH THE VAULT, HUH?
THAT'S TOUGH.
OH! HEY, NAT-SUO!
IT'S HARD TO ASK AGAIN AFTER SHE REFUSED LIKE THAT, TOO.
I'M HOME!
YOU'RE JUST IN TIME!
TSUKIKO-SAAAN! NATSUO'S BACK!
WELCOME HOME, NATSUO-KUN.
WE WERE THINKING OF GOING ONCE RUI GETS HOME.
I'M GLAD YOU MADE IT. I THOUGHT YOU WOULDN'T BE BACK UNTIL LATE.
YOU'LL COME, TOO, RIGHT?
YOU REMEMBER THE SUMMER FESTIVAL WE WENT TO LAST YEAR, DON'T YOU? THAT'S TODAY.
LOOK. TSUKIKO-SAN BOUGHT THESE FOR ME.
HOW DO I LOOK?
ABOUT AS GOOD AS THE MILLION OTHER DADS IN JAPAN WHO DRESS LIKE THAT.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

HMM.
I'VE KINDA HIT A DEAD-END, SO I GUESS I COULD USE A BREAK...
I'M HOME.
OH!
WEL-COME HOME, RUI-CHAN!
THAT MAKES EVERY-ONE!
OKAY.
NOW THAT RUI-CHAN'S HERE, SHALL WE?
NATSUO-KUN JUST CAME HOME, TOO.
YOU'RE GOING TO THE FESTIVAL, TOO?
Y-YEAH.
I THOUGHT I COULD USE A CHANGE OF PACE ...
...
HMM ...
WHAT, CAN'T I?
I GUESS.
ARE YOU GOING TO WEAR YOUR YUKATA, RUI?
IT'LL TAKE TOO LONG TO CHANGE, SO I'LL JUST GO LIKE THIS.

BUTTERED POTATOES
THERE'S GOING TO BE AN EVENT ON STAGE THIS YEAR, TOO.
WANT TO CHECK IT OUT?
UHH ...
I THINK I'LL CHECK OUT THE STALLS FIRST.



I'M GONNA LOOK AROUND, TOO.
ALL RIGHT. WHY DON'T WE MEET UP LATER, THEN?
DO YOU BOTH HAVE YOUR PHONES?
YEAH.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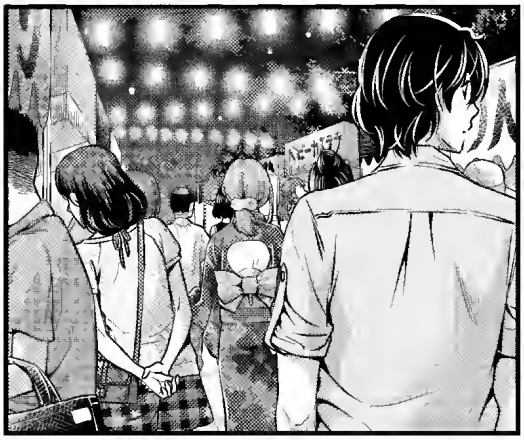


IT FEELS LIKE YOU'RE TAILING ME IF YOU STAY BACK THAT FAR THE WHOLE TIME.
WHAT GOOD WOULD TAILING YOU DO ME?
CAN YOU STOP FOLLOWING ME?!
HUH ?!
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?! THERE'S ONLY ONE PATH!
...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME!
I'M GONNA BUY A CANDIED STRAW-BERRY.
THEN GO ON AHEAD.
SIGN: GOLDFISH SCOOPING
金魚すくい

ARE YOU CRYING?
HELL NO!
OH.
I WAS SURE YOU WERE TEARING UP BECAUSE YOU WERE THINKING ABOUT HINA-NEE.
YOU REALLY LIKE TO RUB SALT IN MY WOUNDS, HUH...?
BACK AT YOU.
HEY...
I'M SORRY.

FOR WHAT?
FOR...
...A LOT OF THINGS.
HIROSHIMA·OKONOMIYAKI
GARAZE

...
DON'T APOLOGIZE.

IT MAKES IT SEEM LIKE...
...YOU PITY ME OR SOME-THING.
...
SORRY...
PLIP

パタ
PLIP
パタ
PLIP
パタ
PLIP
ザアアアア
HUH? IS IT RAIN-ING?
YOU'RE RIGHT.
CRAP. I DIDN'T BRING AN UMBRELLA!
RUI! THIS WAY!
WE CAN TAKE SHELTER UNDER THE ROOF!
WHOA! IT STARTED POURING ALL OF A SUDDEN!
UGH, WE'RE GONNA GET WET!
THE FORECAST DIDN'T MENTION RAIN!
IT CAME OUT OF NO-WHERE!
I'M SOAKED ...
HOPE IT LETS UP SOON ...
ザアアアア

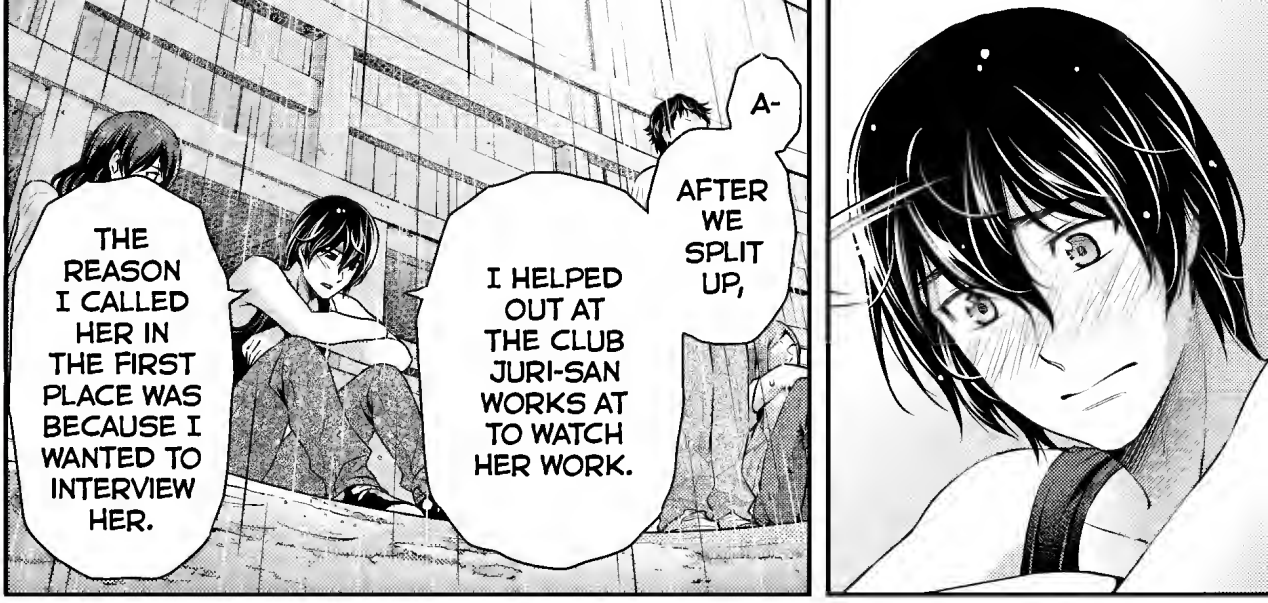
WELL, THIS SUCKS. IT LOOKS LIKE IT'LL PASS OVER, BUT...
HELLO? MOM?
WHERE ARE YOU GUYS?
OH, GOOD. YOU'RE SOMEWHERE WITH COVER, THEN?
...
THEY'RE AT THE MANAGE-MENT TENT.
GREAT. LET'S HEAD OVER THERE ONCE IT STOPS-
!

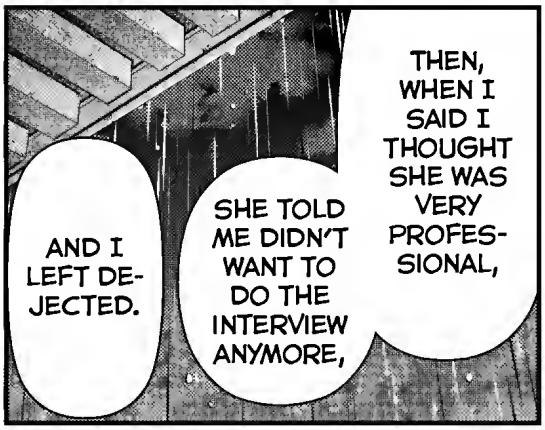
YEAH ...
WELL, GUESS WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING UNTIL IT STOPS RAINING.
LET'S WAIT HERE.
FWIP
?
ACHOO
SNIFF
FLAP

UHH ...
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE COLD.
YOU DON'T WANNA GET SICK.
...
キュッ
SQUEEZE
GIMME A BREAK! I WAS SORTING DOCUMENTS AT SENSEI'S HOUSE ALL DAY!
SNIFF SNIFF
IT SMELLS LIKE SWEAT.

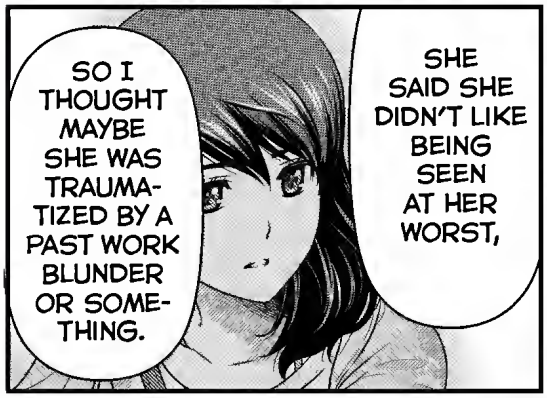
ABOUT MY DATE YESTERDAY ...
FIRST WE MET UP AND GOT LUNCH,
THEN WE SAW A MOVIE.
AFTER WE SPLIT UP WITH YOU GUYS,
WE WALKED AROUND YOYOGI PARK,
CHECKED OUT THE PLANETARIUM, THEN WENT HOME.
AL LOOKED UP A REALLY NICE PLACE FOR LUNCH,
AND ASKED ME IF THERE WAS ANYTHING I COULDN'T EAT.
HE HELD MY HAND UP AND DOWN THE STAIRS AT THE MOVIE THEATER,
LOOKED AROUND FOR A BENCH WHEN I SAID I WAS TIRED,
AND WAS JUST CONSIDERATE OVERALL.
HE WAS ... REALLY NICE.
I SEE ...
THAT'S ALL?

THAT'S ALL...?

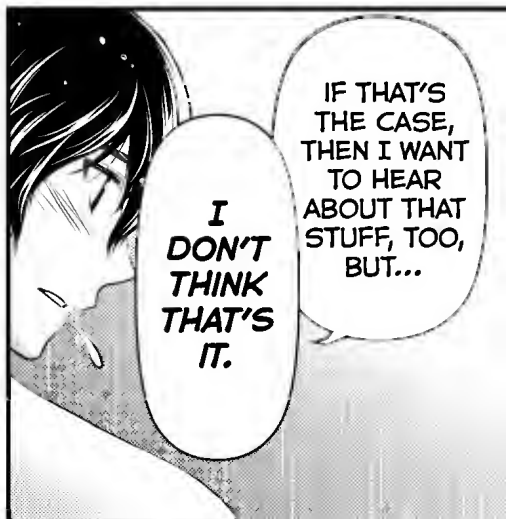

A-
AFTER WE SPLIT UP,
I HELPED OUT AT THE CLUB JURI-SAN WORKS AT TO WATCH HER WORK.
THE REASON I CALLED HER IN THE FIRST PLACE WAS BECAUSE I WANTED TO INTERVIEW HER.


THEN, WHEN I SAID I THOUGHT SHE WAS VERY PROFESSIONAL,
SHE TOLD ME DIDN'T WANT TO DO THE INTERVIEW ANYMORE,
AND I LEFT DEJECTED.

SHE'S REALLY AMAZING AT SHOWING CUSTOMERS A GOOD TIME.
THE STAFF SAID SHE'S ONE OF THEIR TOP HOSTESSES.
YESTERDAY SHE UPSET A CUSTOMER WHO WAS A LITTLE TOO DRUNK,
BUT I WAS BLOWN AWAY BY HOW SHE JUST TOOK IT WITH A SMILE.


SHE SAID SHE DIDN'T LIKE BEING SEEN AT HER WORST,
SO I THOUGHT MAYBE SHE WAS TRAUMATIZED BY A PAST WORK BLUNDER OR SOMETHING.

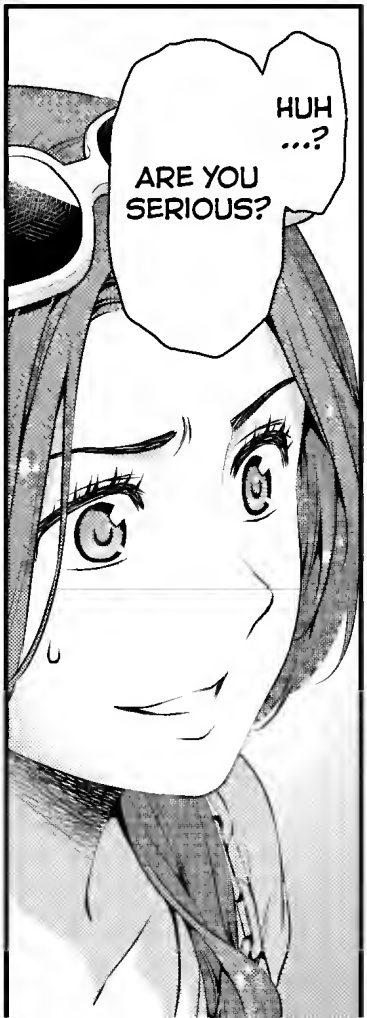
DID SHE SAY ANYTHING ELSE?
HUH?


IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN I WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THAT STUFF, TOO, BUT...
I DON'T THINK THAT'S IT.

THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS PRETTY IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRY.
I'M SURE SHE TOOK THAT INTO CONSID-ERATION.
WHAT I THINK...
IS THAT SHE FELT LIKE YOU WERE GOING TO TOUCH ON A REALLY VULNERABLE PART OF HER.
SOMETHING SHE CAN'T QUITE COME TO TERMS WITH.
A CRUCIAL PART OF WHO SHE IS.
SHE PROBABLY TURNED DOWN THE INTERVIEW OUT OF SELF-DEFENSE ...
BECAUSE SHE THOUGHT YOU'D SHAKE HER TO THE CORE IF YOU DUG ANY DEEPER.
AT LEAST, THAT'S THE KIND OF THING THAT WOULD MAKE ME...
GO BACK ON A PROM-ISE.
THAT'S IT, RUI!
IT ISN'T ABOUT BEING GOOD OR BAD AT HER JOB!
THE HINT LIES IN THERE SOME-WHERE!
GRAB
THAT'S IT...
I SEE... I'LL TRY TALKING TO HER TOMOR-ROW.
PAT
PAT
THANKS! I OWE YOU!

I TOLD YOU I'M NOT DOING THE INTER-VIEW.
HAVE YOU FALLEN FOR ME SO HARD YOU'D STOOP TO WAITING OUTSIDE MY APART-MENT?
NATSUO-KUN.
TRUE, I CAN'T JUST BACK DOWN THAT EASILY.
THAT'S WHY,
I WANT YOU TO SHOW ME...
...YOUR MOST PRIVATE PARTS!

CHAPTER 102: ABOUT JURI



SORRY, I MEANT TO SAY "MOST PRIVATE HEART!!"
WHAT THE HELL?! HOW COULD YOU SCREW THAT UP SO BADLY?!

VA...
GASP

WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU CALL SOMEONE WHO SHOWS UP AND ASKS, "LET ME SEE YOUR *BEEP*" OUT OF NOWHERE?!
P-PERVERT?!
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE A TOTAL PERVERT!
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?!

DON'T MAKE ME REPEAT MYSELF!
I SAID I DON'T WANT TO BECAUSE IT'S EMBARRASSING!
YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT!

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE AT THE CLUB...
I JUST WANTED A CHANCE TO TALK TO YOU AGAIN.

EVEN THE MANAGER SAID YOU PUT ACTRESSES TO SHAME WITH HOW YOU HANDLED THINGS...

IT TAKES A LOT OF PROFESSIONALISM TO BE ABLE TO STAY CALM AND SMILE AT ALL TIMES!
THE WAY YOU HANDLED THAT BAD CUSTOMER WITH FORTITUDE WAS REALLY IMPRESSIVE!
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO BE EMBARRASSED ABOUT!
THAT'S NOT SOMETHING ANYONE CAN DO!

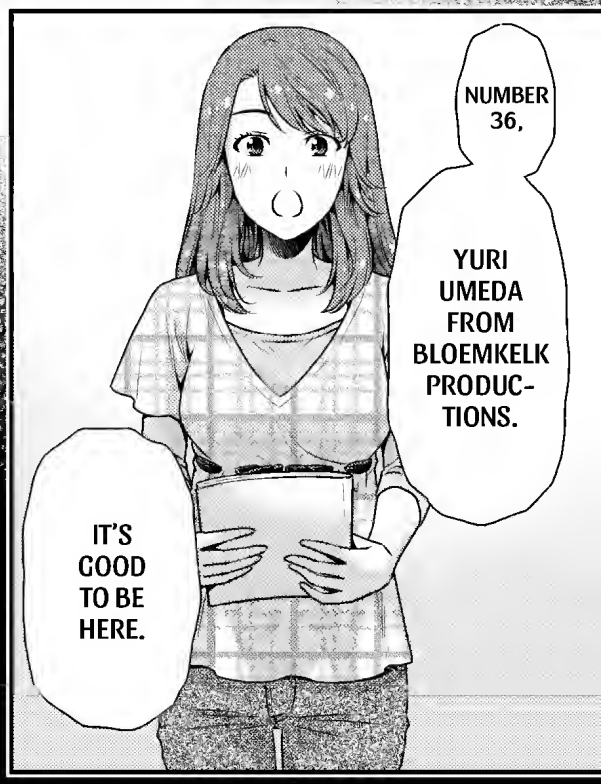
FREEZE
I GET IT NOW.
THE THING YOU'RE MOST VULNERABLE ABOUT,
WHAT SETS YOU OFF...
...IS "ACTRESS,"
ISN'T IT?
...!
WHILE I WAS TALKING JUST NOW,
I MIXED IN SOME THINGS I SAID WHEN YOU TURNED DOWN THE INTERVIEW.
THE LOOK IN YOUR EYE CHANGED WHEN I SAID, "ACTRESS."
I SEE.
SO, THAT'S HOW IT IS.
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T TELL ANYONE.
THAT'S A RESPECTABLE PROFESSION, TOO.
YOU USED TO...
DO PORN, DIDN'T YOU?

NO, I DID NOT.
BYE.
AAH!
WAIT!
I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU'D WANT TO HIDE IT, AND I'M SURE YOU HAD YOUR REASONS FOR DOING IT, BUT...
I'VE NEVER DONE PORN!
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T LOOK UP YOUR VIDEOS OR ANYTHING!
LISTEN TO ME!
ﾊｸｼｭﾝ
THANK GOD...
I'M GLAD YOU FINALLY FEEL LIKE TALKING!
ｾﾞｰｰ WHEEZE
ｾﾞｰｰ WHEEZE
ｾﾞｰｰ WHEEZE
YOU'RE ONE PERSISTENT KID.
YOU MIGHT BE CUT OUT FOR THIS, NATSUO-KUN.
Y'MEAN BEING A WRITER ?!
BEING A STALKER.
HEY!

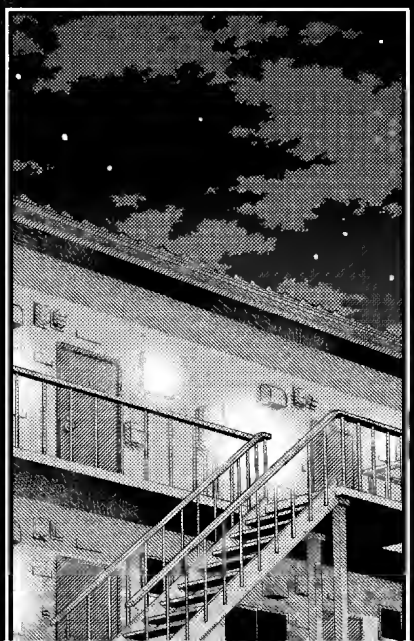
...
ENOUGH.
I'VE NEVER DONE PORN.
QUIT MAKING ASSUMPTIONS...
MEANS I TAKE IT YOUR AGENCY PUSHED YOU TO DO IT?
SO, THE FACT THAT YOU WANT TO HIDE YOUR PORN PAST SO MUCH...
I WANTED TO BECOME AN ACTRESS.
IT WAS MY DREAM.
I NEVER FORGOT HOW FULFILLING IT WAS TO ACT IN FRONT OF A CROWD,
BUT I WAS IN THE DRAMA CLUB IN HIGH SCHOOL.
SO I DROPPED OUT OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND DECIDED TO BECOME AN ACTRESS.
I DIDN'T TELL KURUMIN-SENSEI,
OH, I DON'T MEAN A PORN ACTRESS.
ONE WHO DOES MOVIES, TV, AND THEATER.

I MOVED TO TOKYO FROM AKITA...
AND SIGNED WITH A TINY AGENCY.
AFTER THAT,
IT WAS WORK, ACTING LESSONS, AND AUDITIONS,
DAY IN AND DAY OUT.

HUH? YOUR NAME'S ACTUALLY YURI?
UH-HUH. JURI IS MY PROFES-SIONAL NAME.
I SEE ...


NUMBER 36,
YURI UMEDA FROM BLOEMKELK PRODUC-TIONS.
IT'S GOOD TO BE HERE.

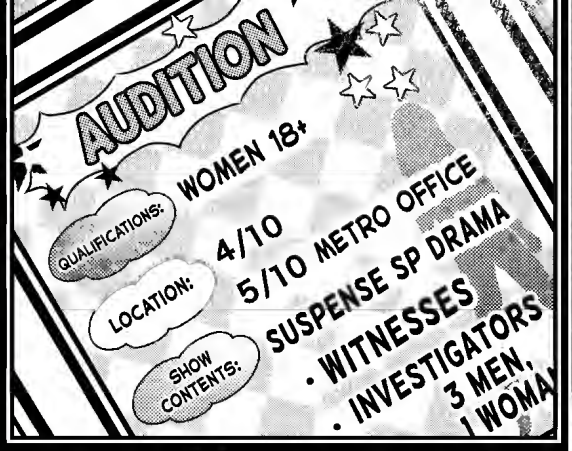
WHAT'S GOING ON, SIS?!
YOU SAID YOU NEVER MET HIM BEFORE!



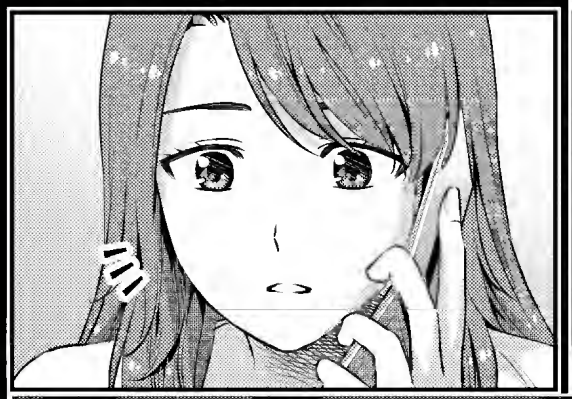
O-OKAY.
SORRY...

HMM.
YOU'RE OVER-ACTING A LITTLE BIT.
TRY TAKING IT DOWN A NOTCH.
SIGN: JUDGE

PEOPLE BACK HOME PRAISED MY ACTING AND SAID I WAS CUTE.
I WENT TO AUDITION AFTER AUDITION AND FAILED EVERY SINGLE ONE.
I WAS SHOCKED AT JUST HOW HARD IT WAS TO GET A BREAK.
BUZZ
YES.
I SEE.
OKAY.
I'LL DO MY BEST NEXT TIME.
IT REALLY TOOK ME DOWN A PEG.


AUDITION
QUALIFICATIONS:
WOMEN 18+
LOCATION:
4/10
5/10 METRO OFFICE
SHOW CONTENTS:
SUSPENSE SP DRAMA
• WITNESSES
• INVESTIGATORS
3 MEN,
1 WOMA

SIP
SIP
カリ
ｷｭｯ
CHAK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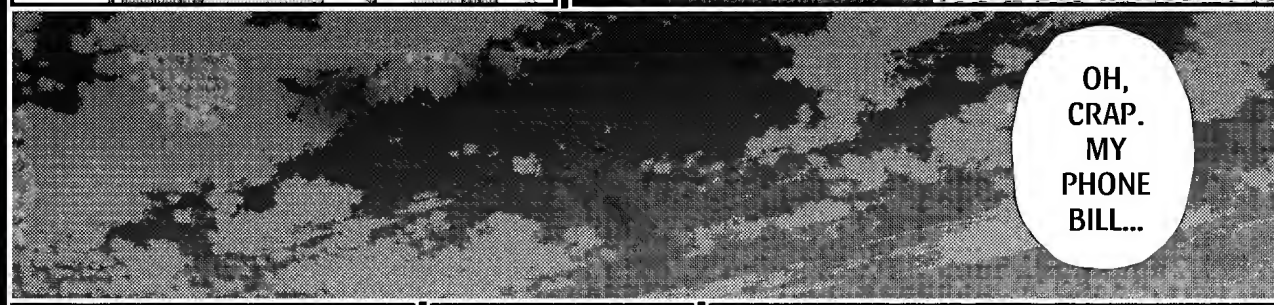
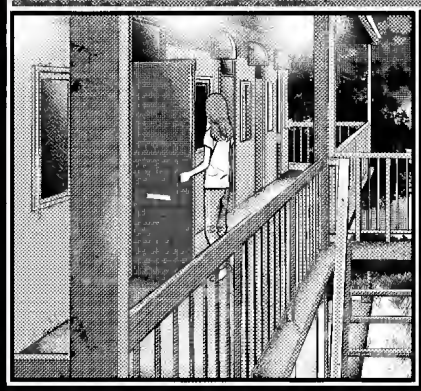

OH, CRAP. MY PHONE BILL...



カリ
ﾁｬｯ
CLACK...

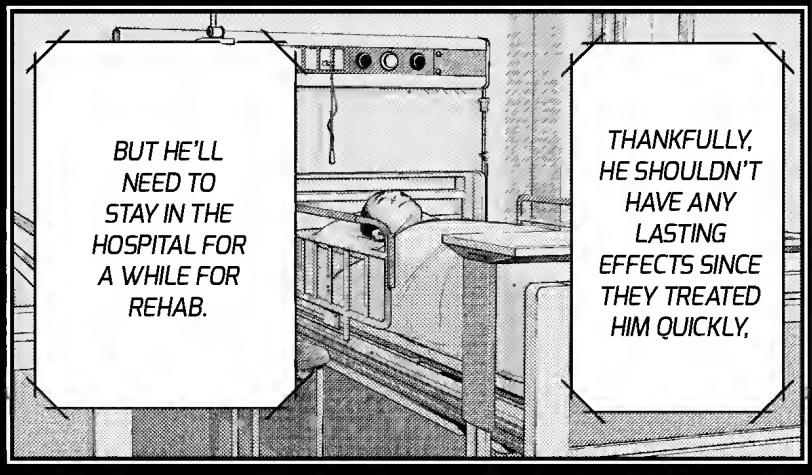
HEY, MOM?
SORRY, I'M KINDA SHORT ON CASH THIS MONTH, TOO...
I CAN BARELY PAY FOR MY ACTING LESSONS.
I'M REALLY SORRY ...

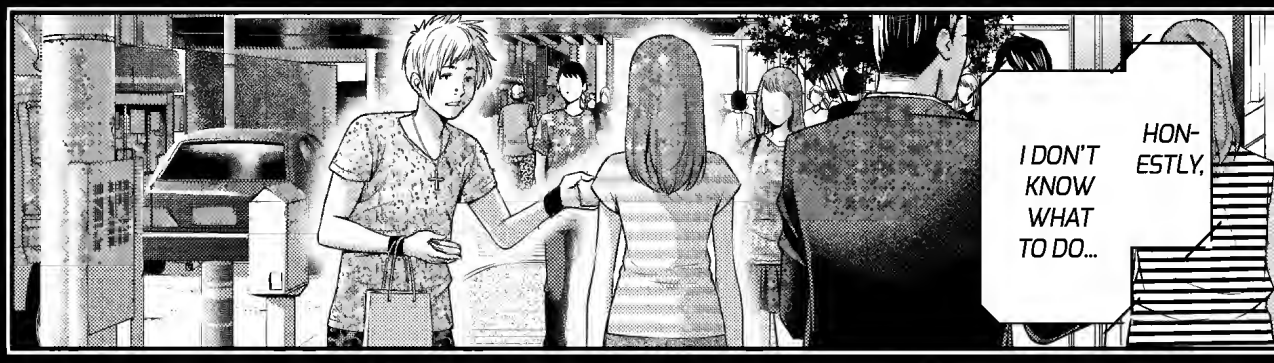
BEEP
ﾋﾟｯ

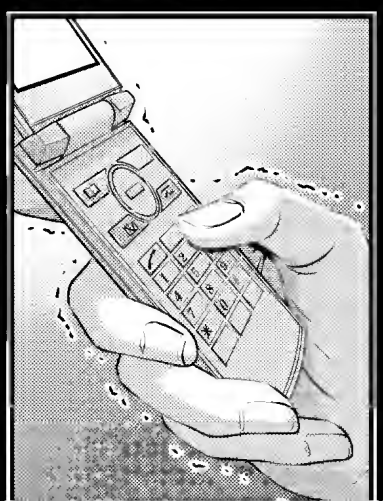
BOOP
I KEPT IGNORING ALL MY MANAGER'S PHONE CALLS.
EXQUISITE FLUFFY OMURICE
AT FIRST, I DIDN'T WANT TO TAKE THIS KIND OF JOB AT ALL.
I WAS SCOUTED, ACTUALLY.
I'D GET MY CHANCE EVENTU-ALLY.
I KEPT BELIEVING THAT IF I WORKED MY ASS OFF...
EVEN SO, I NEVER GAVE UP HOPE.
I CRIED AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK.
I WAS FRUSTRATED, ANXIOUS, AND MISERABLE.
IT WAS DIS-HEART-ENING.
DAD...
...COL-LAPSED ?
HE-
HELLO? MOM?
SORRY, I'M ABOUT TO HAVE AN AUDITION...
HUH ?
THEN, ONE DAY...
ヴ"
ヴ"
BVVV
B"VVV

THE DOCTOR SAID HE HAD A STROKE.
HE WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL FROM WORK.

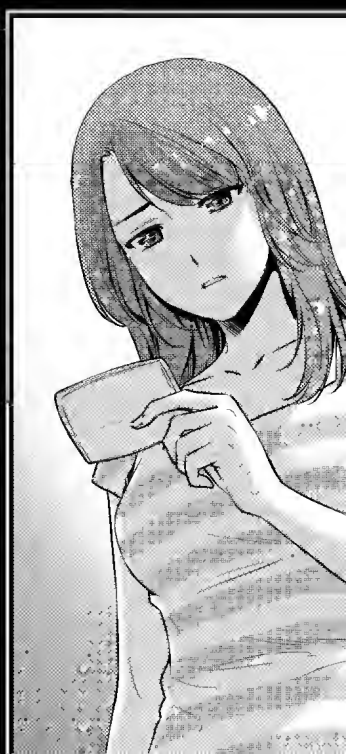
銀行


BUT HE'LL NEED TO STAY IN THE HOSPITAL FOR A WHILE FOR REHAB.
THANKFULLY, HE SHOULDN'T HAVE ANY LASTING EFFECTS SINCE THEY TREATED HIM QUICKLY,

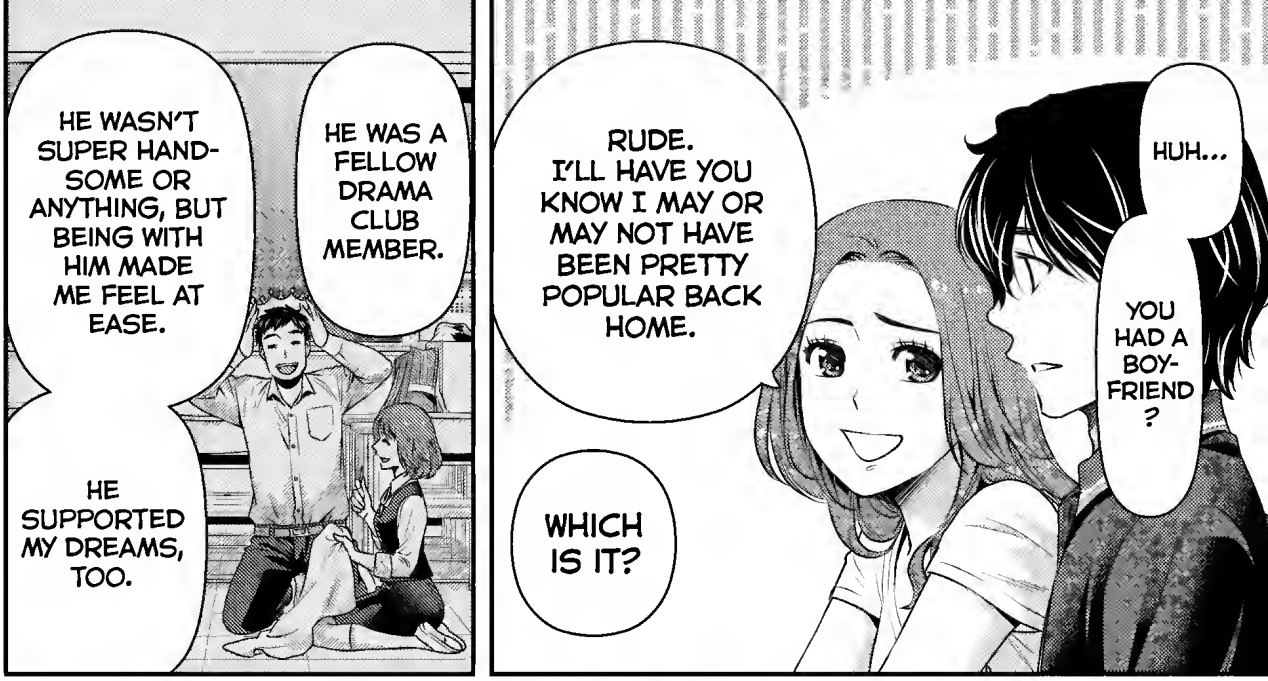

HON-ESTLY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...

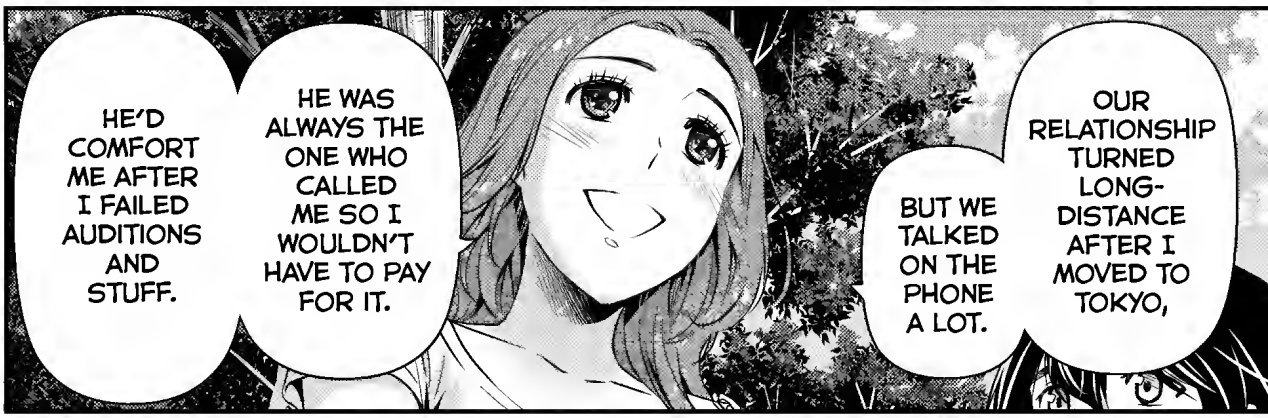


LOOKING FOR FLOOR STAFF
DAY PAY OK
FUN AND FAST-PACE
GIRL CLUB
青の蝶
Night Butterfly
NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!
Recruiting Office
03-XXX-



AND ...
HERE WE ARE.
AND I PROBABLY JUST WASN'T TALENTED ENOUGH IF I FAILED FOR SO LONG.
I'M TOO OLD TO MAKE MY DEBUT NOW.
IT'S FINE!
HUH? ARE YOU REALLY OKAY WITH GIVING UP LIKE THAT?
YOU DIDN'T DECIDE TO QUIT AFTER THINKING ABOUT IT LONG AND HARD, RIGHT?
CAN'T YOU CHASE AFTER YOUR DREAMS AGAIN NOW THAT YOU'RE STABLE FINANCIALLY?
...TO THE WORD "ACTRESS?"
THEN, WHY DO YOU HAVE SUCH A STRONG AVERSION...
...OF MY EX-BOYFRIEND.
BECAUSE IT REMINDS ME...


HUH...
YOU HAD A BOY-FRIEND?
RUDE. I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW I MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN PRETTY POPULAR BACK HOME.
WHICH IS IT?
HE WAS A FELLOW DRAMA CLUB MEMBER.
HE WASN'T SUPER HAND-SOME OR ANYTHING, BUT BEING WITH HIM MADE ME FEEL AT EASE.
HE SUPPORTED MY DREAMS, TOO.


OUR RELATIONSHIP TURNED LONG-DISTANCE AFTER I MOVED TO TOKYO,
BUT WE TALKED ON THE PHONE A LOT.
HE WAS ALWAYS THE ONE WHO CALLED ME SO I WOULDN'T HAVE TO PAY FOR IT.
HE'D COMFORT ME AFTER I FAILED AUDITIONS AND STUFF.

HEARING HIM CHEER ME ON SO ENTHUSI-ASTICALLY,
I DIDN'T HAVE THE HEART TO TELL HIM I GAVE UP ON MY DREAMS.
I SAW SOME-THING ONLINE.
DID YOU KNOW?
THERE'S AN AUDITION COMING UP FOR KONEDA'S NEW MOVIE.
THEY SAY HE LOVES FINDING NEW TALENT,
SO I THINK THIS MIGHT BE YOUR CHANCE.
YOU SHOULD TELL THE AGENCY.

ALSO, LOCAL LINE PRODUCTIONS IS GONNA BE PUTTING ON A PLAY THERE...
MOTOKI ...
I THINK ...
...WE SHOULD BREAK UP.
Call Connected
Call Time 37:42
HUH ?
IT RE-MINDED ME...
...OF HOW SAD HE SOUNDED DURING OUR LAST PHONE CALL.
IN THE END, I WAS TOO WEAK.
AFTER THAT, ASIDE FROM WHEN I WAS IN HOSTESS MODE...
"ACTRESS" BECAME A WORD I DIDN'T WANT TO SO MUCH AS SEE OR HEAR.
WELL, YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW, I GUESS...
FWIP

LET'S GO SEE THIS MOTOKI-SAN!
RIGHT NOW!
HUH ?!
WE'LL TAKE THE BULLET TRAIN! IF IT LOOKS LIKE A DAY TRIP'S PUSHING IT, THEN WE CAN SPEND THE NIGHT THERE!
NO WAY! NOT HAP-PENING!
I HAVE TO WORK!
THE SAME THING HAPPENED TO ME.
BESIDES, IT'S ALL IN THE PAST...

HUH ...?
I WENT THROUGH AN UNWANTED BREAKUP, TOO.
THOUGH I WAS THE ONE WHO GOT DUMPED.
I JUST COULDN'T ACCEPT IT AND NEVER GOT OVER HER.
BUT AFTER TALKING TO HER AGAIN A WHILE AGO...
I FINALLY MANAGED TO SORT OUT MY FEELINGS.

I'M SURE IT'LL TAKE A LOAD OFF YOUR CHEST ...
...IF YOU TALK TO MOTOKI-SAN.
SO,
LET'S GO!
YANK
I DON'T CARE IF WE AXE THE IN-TERVIEW!
HANG ON! THIS IS ALL TOO SUDDEN ...!
OH?
IF IT ISN'T YURIPPE ...
...AND THE BOY FROM THE OTHER DAY.
YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER?
ERIKA-SAN?!
ETSUO ...
E-RI-KA !
HOLD UP. WON'T THAT OUTFIT GET YOU STOPPED BY POLICE?
WHAT? IS THERE ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THIS ELEGANT COORDI-NATE?
GUESS THEY JUST TURN A BLIND EYE SINCE HE'S SO OPEN ABOUT IT...

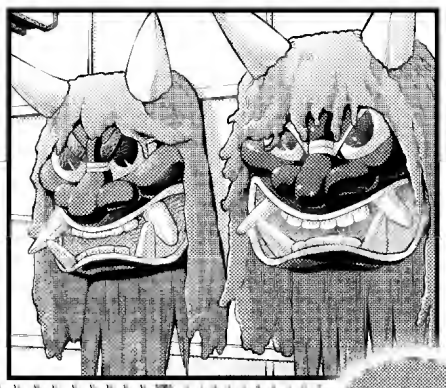
WE'RE BOTH MEMBERS OF THE NIGHTLIFE, AFTER ALL.
AND WE'RE ALSO BOTH FROM AKITA, SO WE HIT IT OFF.
THAT'S RIGHT.
WE MET THROUGH TOGEN-SENSEI.
WAIT, YOU KNOW YURI-SAN, TOO?
BY THE WAY, I SAW YOU TWO GOING AT IT JUST NOW.
WHAT HAPPENED ?
SO, YOU WANT HER TO MEET HER EX.
I SEE.
ACTU-ALLY,
I MET YURI-SAN THROUGH TOGEN-SENSEI, TOO.
I ASKED HER TO DO AN INTERVIEW FOR A STORY, BUT...
YURIPPE BLABBED ABOUT IT WHEN SHE GOT WASTED AT OUR CLUB ONCE.
MORE OR LESS.
YOU KNEW, ERIKA-SAN?
ABOUT EVERY-THING ...

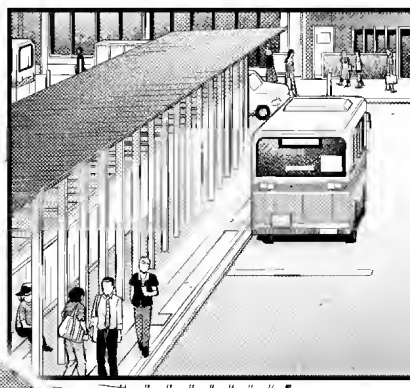
I AGREE WITH HIM.
IF HE'S WILLING TO GO WITH YOU, THEN I THINK THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY.
GET OFF YOUR BUTT AND SCOOT!
OTHERWISE, YOUR MELO-DRAMATIC BEHIND WILL KEEP WHINING FOREVER.
HEY!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUT IT THAT WAY!
IRK
イラ
I WOULDN'T BE SUR-PRISED IF HE'S WITH SOMEONE ELSE NOW, TOO...
BESIDES, I'M THE ONE WHO BROKE IT OFF.
HE'LL PROBABLY JUST THINK, "IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR THAT," RIGHT?
EVEN IF I GET ALL EXCITED TO GO MEET HIM...
...WHO KNOWS WHAT HE HAS GOING ON!
AAH!
CAN IT, MISSY!
GRAB

HEY...! PUT ME DOWN, ERIKA! SERI-OUSLY!
QUIT YOUR COM-PLAINING AND GO!
QUIET! YOU'LL JUST RUN AWAY IF I PUT YOU DOWN!
ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO! JUST STOP CARRYING ME LIKE THIS!
BOY, BUY THE TICKETS IN HER NAME, OKAY?
O-
OKAY.
HE'S COMING, TOO?!

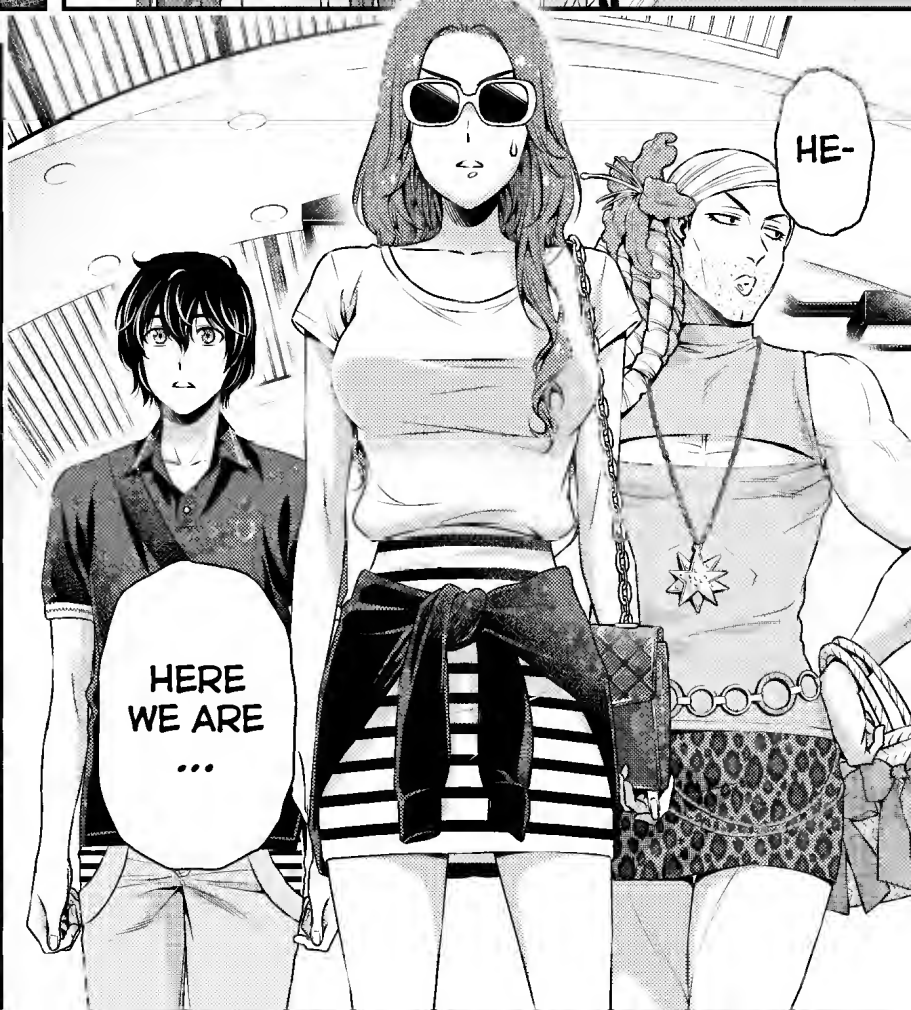
CHAPTER 103: ACTING

CLACK





WHAAAT? HANG ON A SEC! HOW AM I EVEN SUPPOSED TO FACE HIM?!
FWIP
DON'T CHICKEN OUT NOW! YOU'RE A GROWN WOMAN!


HE-
HERE WE ARE ...

BUT I'M THE ONE WHO DUMPED HIM...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I SHOULD SAY.
FOR STARTERS, HOW ABOUT, "LONG TIME NO SEE. HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?"
AND THEN ?
...
"NICE BUTT YOU'VE GOT THERE."
"WANNA GET A ROOM?"
STROKE
STROKE
THAT KIND OF COMMU-NICATION ONLY WORKS FOR YOU!
JEEZ. I'M BEING SERIOUS HERE...
I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD LET THE FACT THAT YOU BROKE UP GET TO YOU THAT MUCH.
YOU COULD JUST START BY ASKING, "WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO?"
THEN EASE INTO IT AFTER CATCHING UP A BIT.
I SHOULDN'T GET ALL SERIOUS RIGHT OFF THE BAT...
I SEE ...
YOU'RE RIGHT.

WHO'S SHE?
A FRIEND FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL!

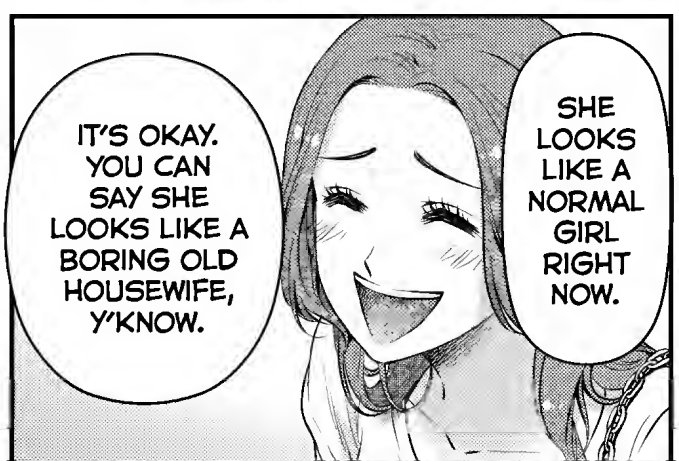
!
MIWAKO?!

HM?
UMM...
IT'S ME!
YURI UMEDA, FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL!
YURI?!

MIWAKO!

HUH...
HARD TO IMAGINE SHE'S A TOP-RANKING HOSTESS IN SHINJUKU.

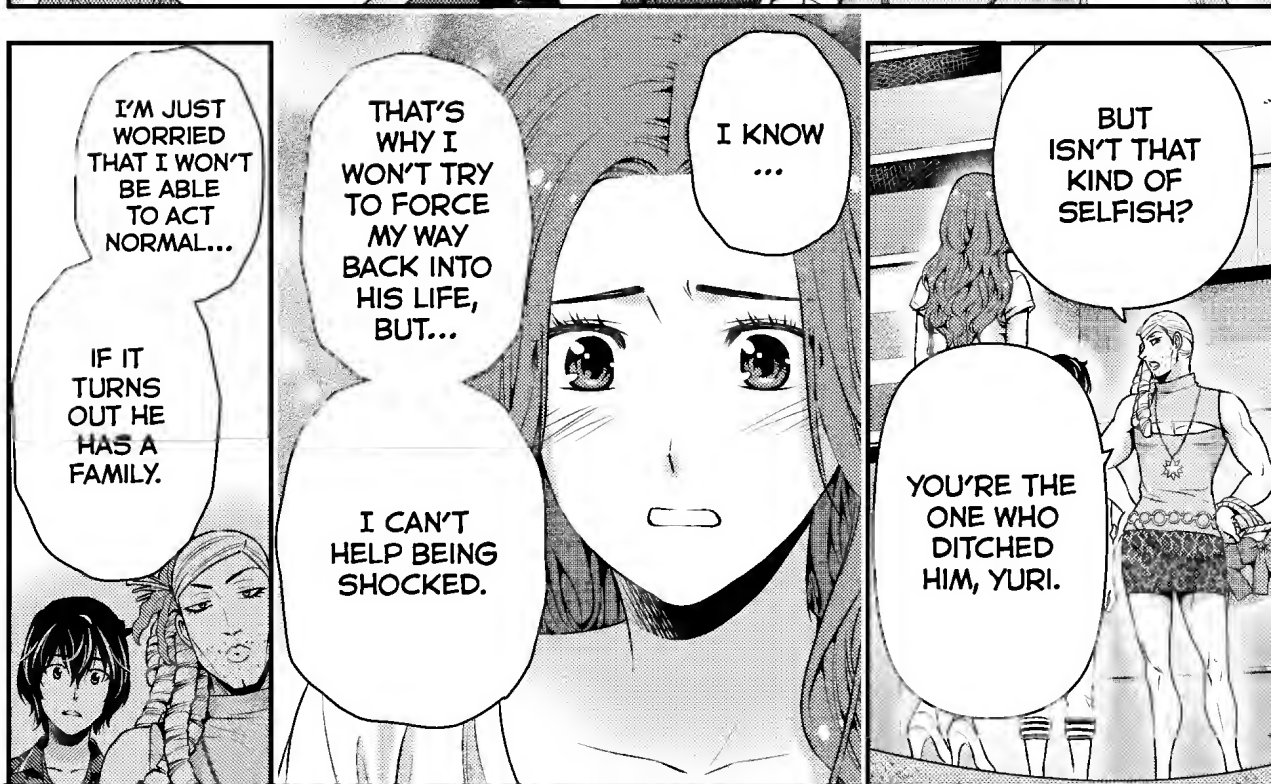
OH, MY GOD! IT'S BEEN FOREVER!
I KNOW, RIGHT? HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
GREAT! WOW, LOOK SO PRETTY, YURI!
OH, STOP. FLATTERY WON'T GET YOU ANY-WHERE!


SHE LOOKS LIKE A NORMAL GIRL RIGHT NOW.
IT'S OKAY. YOU CAN SAY SHE LOOKS LIKE A BORING OLD HOUSEWIFE, Y'KNOW.

THE BUS IS GONNA BE HERE IN FIVE MINUTES!
UHH... I WORK AT A RESTAURANT OF SORTS IN TOKYO.
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO LATELY?
TOKYO? WOW!
MOMMY!
WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU'RE RUNNING A FARMER'S CO-OP, RIGHT?
O-
OH ...
IS THAT SO...?
I'M A FULL-TIME HOUSEWIFE NOW, BUT IT'S ROUGH BEING A MOM. THEY'RE A REAL HANDFUL!
MY KIDS ARE FIVE AND THREE.
YEP.
I MARRIED A MAN I MET THROUGH THE CO-OP.
OKAY. THANKS, YUTO.
M-MOMMY?!

DID YOUR OLD FRIEND'S HAPPI-NESS GET TO YOU?
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE GOT A BAD CASE OF CONSTIPA-TION.
...
WHEN YOU'RE MY AGE.
I WAS JUST THINKING IT'S NOT SURPRISING TO BE MAR-RIED WITH KIDS...
I GUESS SO.
NO, WELL ...

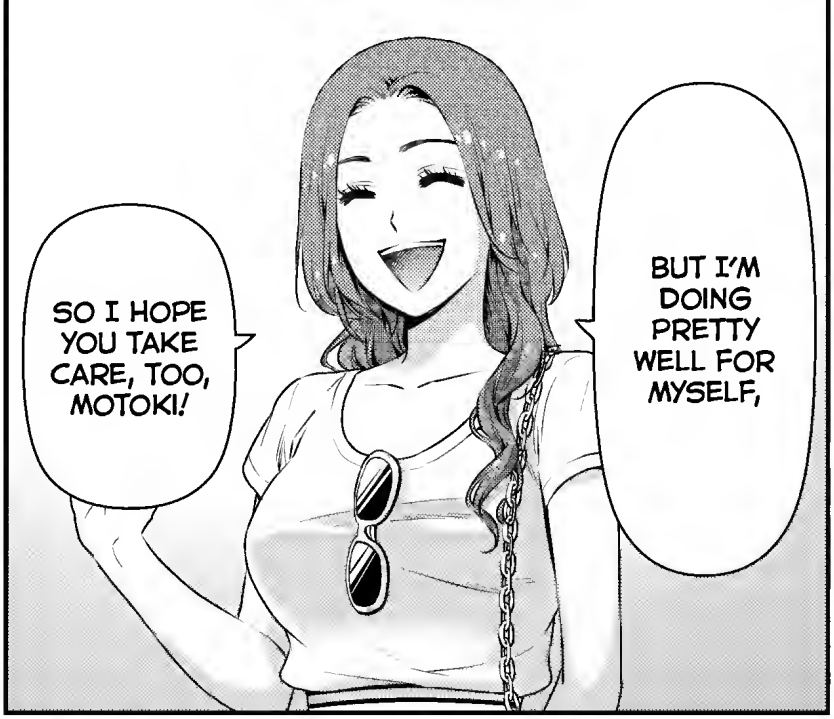
IT WOULD BE PRETTY SHOCK-ING TO FIND OUT SOMEONE YOU NEVER GOT OVER GOT MARRIED...
WELL, PEOPLE GET HITCHED EARLY IN THE BOONIES, AFTER ALL.


I'M JUST WORRIED THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO ACT NORMAL...
IF IT TURNS OUT HE HAS A FAMILY.
THAT'S WHY I WON'T TRY TO FORCE MY WAY BACK INTO HIS LIFE, BUT...
I CAN'T HELP BEING SHOCKED.
I KNOW ...
BUT ISN'T THAT KIND OF SELFISH?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DITCHED HIM, YURI.

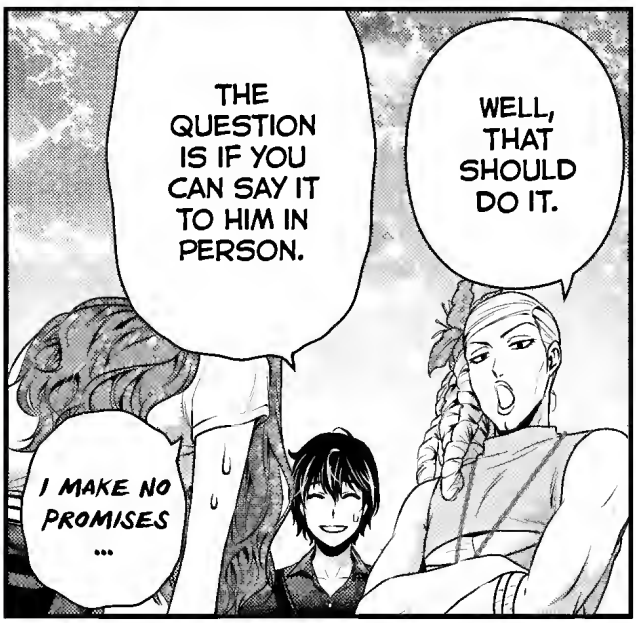
I SEE.
GOT IT.
THEN, LET'S PRACTICE ...
...FOR YOUR CONVER-SATION WITH MOTOKI-SAN!
HUH ?!
PRETEND I'M MOTOKI-SAN!
THAT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA.
RUNNING A SIMULATION MIGHT MAKE THINGS LESS AWKWARD DURING THE REAL DEAL.
...I SEE.
THEN, I'LL PLAY HIS KID.
DADDY! BUY ME A TOY!
AN ADULT ONE.
SORRY, BUT CAN YOU AT LEAST PLAY HIS GIRL-FRIEND OR SOMETHING? THAT'S PUSHING IT A LITTLE TOO MUCH.

WHAT DID HE CALL YOU, YURI-SAN?
JUST YURI.
OKAY, THEN TRY TALKING TO ME AS IF I WAS MOTOKI-SAN.
UH-HUH ...
WHAT-EVER.
I CAN TRY TO WORK WITH THIS.
MOTO-KIII!
WHO'S SHEEE?
SHE'S GROSS.
WOOOV
HEY, YURI.
LONG TIME NO SEE!
OKAY!
CUT! CUUUT!
H-HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?
STIFF
LONG TIME NO SEE, MOTOKI!
STIFF
LO-

YOU USED TO BE A WOULD-BE ACTRESS, RIGHT?! GET IT TOGETHER!
LET'S START AGAIN FROM THE TOP.
I'M SO ASHAMED ...
GOOD THING WE PRAC-TICED.
YOU WERE STIFFER THAN A PICKET FENCE, GIRL!
YOU CALL THAT ACTING?
GOOD, YOU?
WHO'S SHE, MOTOKIII ?
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ?
OH, MOTOKI! LONG TIME NO SEE!
HEY, YURI!
THIS IS TOUGH ...
IT WON'T MATTER IF YOU CAN SAY YOUR LINES RIGHT IF IT SHOWS UP ON YOUR FACE!
YOUR BROW'S FUR-ROWED!
HI, THERE. MY NAME'S UMEDA. I WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL WITH MOTOKI.
OH, IS THIS YOUR NEW GIRL-FRIEND ?


SO I HOPE YOU TAKE CARE, TOO, MOTOKI!
BUT I'M DOING PRETTY WELL FOR MYSELF,

THIRTY MINUTES LATER
A LOT HAPPENED AFTER THAT,


I MAKE NO PROMISES ...
THE QUESTION IS IF YOU CAN SAY IT TO HIM IN PERSON.
WELL, THAT SHOULD DO IT.

HEY, WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY'RE DOING?
PRACTICING FOR A SKIT, PROBABLY. THEY LOOK LIKE COMEDIANS.
AHH. GOTCHA.

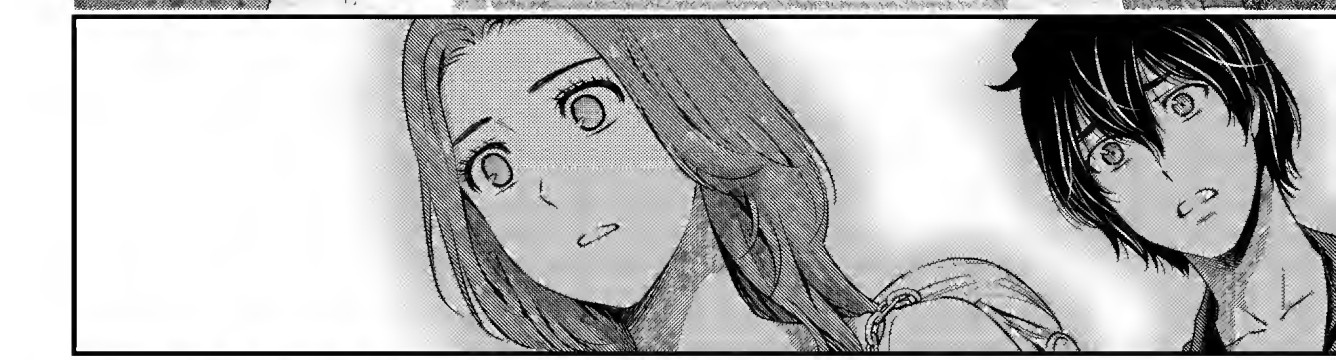
OH?
READY!
WHY DON'T WE GO THROUGH IT ONE MORE TIME, THEN?

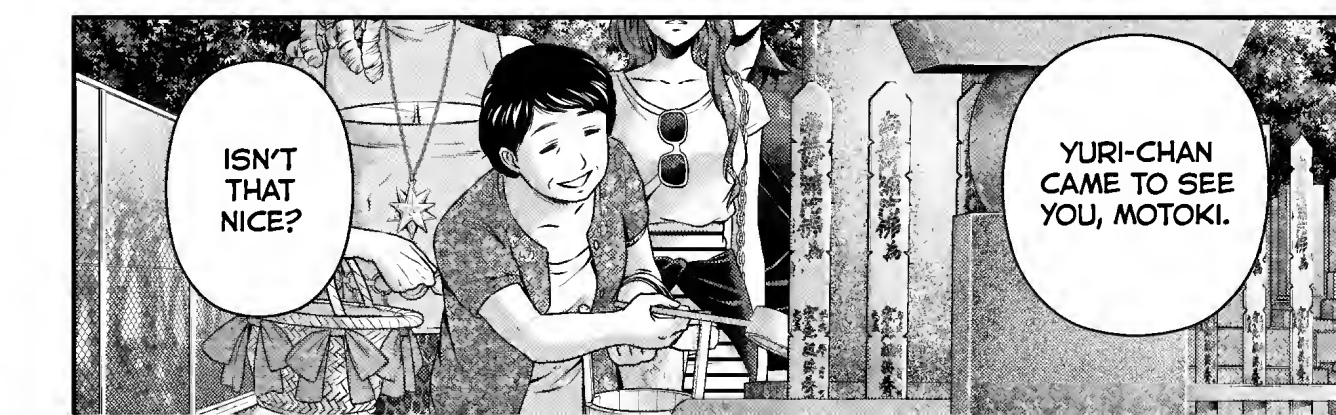
!
OH, MY! DID YOU MOVE BACK?
DO YOU REMEMBER ME?
IS THAT YOU?
YURI-CHAN!
O-
OF COURSE I DO!
YOU'RE MOTOKI'S MOTHER ...
HI-
HIS MOTHER?!
MY, YOU'VE GOTTEN SO PRETTY.
BUT YOU LOOK SO MUCH THINNER THAN THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU.
ARE YOU EATING RIGHT?
YES ...
I'D BE HAPPY TO SEND YOU SOME OF OUR RICE IF YOU'D LIKE.

OH, MY. WHAT'S WRONG?
LIFT YOUR HEAD, DEAR.
UMM ...
I'M REALLY SORRY!
EWP
MOTOKI WAS SO GOOD TO ME,
BUT I...
BUT ...
I KNOW.
THINGS HAPPEN IN RELATION-SHIPS. I'M SURE YOU HAD YOUR REASONS.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
I'M SURE MOTOKI WILL BE HAPPY.
IF YOU HAVE TIME, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HIM?

...!
GRIP
YES ...
I'D LOVE TO!

STONE: NAKABAYASHI FAMILY
仲林家之墓




ISN'T THAT NICE?
YURI-CHAN CAME TO SEE YOU, MOTOKI.

IF ONLY I WERE...
HE PASSED AWAY FROM LEUKEMIA LAST FALL.
YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?
WH-WHAT'S GOING ON?
YOU'RE KIDDING...
HE WAS GONE BEFORE WE KNEW IT.
IT PRO-GRESSED QUICKLY, SINCE HE WAS YOUNG.
HE SAID HIS BACK HAD BEEN HURT-ING FOR THE PAST COUPLE YEARS, BUT TO THINK IT WAS CANCER...
...HE WORRIED THAT...
HE MIGHT'VE JUST BEEN PUTTING MORE PRESSURE ON YOU.
HE REALLY BEAT HIMSELF UP AFTER YOU TWO BROKE UP.
WHILE HE THOUGHT HE WAS BEING SUPPORTIVE BY CHEERING YOU ON...
SINCE YOU WERE DOING YOUR BEST IN TOKYO.
HE SAID HE DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE YOU WORRY...
I'M SORRY I DIDN'T TELL YOU.
MOTOKI INSISTED.

OH.
YES ...
YOU HAVE A TRAIN TO CATCH, RIGHT?
YOU'D BETTER GET GOING.

ARE YOU JUST GONNA LEAVE LIKE THIS?

YOU'VE BEEN SILENT THIS WHOLE TIME...
WHY DON'T YOU SAY SOMETHING, TOO?

AND YES, I EAT MORE THAN INSTANT RAMEN.
I'VE BEEN GETTING BY SOMEHOW.

STONE: NAKABAYASHI FAMILY
仲林家之墓
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I'M ON A DIFFERENT PATH FOR NOW.
ACT-ING?
OOF. IT KINDA HURTS TO HEAR YOU ASK, ACTUALLY.

A LOT HAPPENED AFTER THAT...
I KNOW IT'S A LITTLE LATE, BUT I'M SORRY.

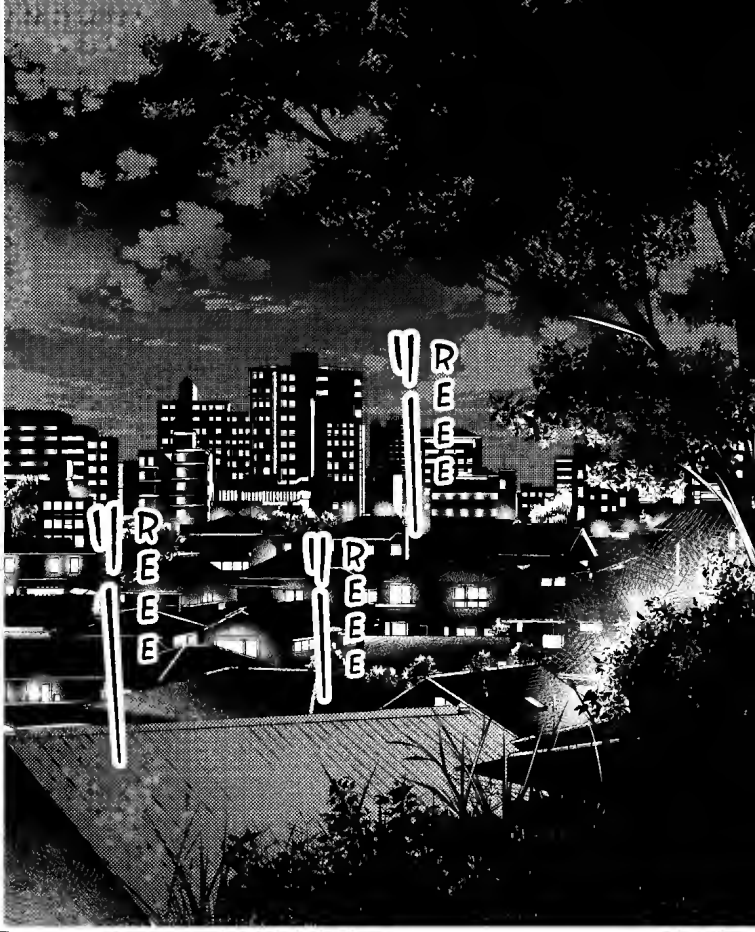
LONG TIME NO SEE, MOTOKI!
HOW HAVE YOU BEEN?

...BUT I'M DOING...
...PRETTY WELL FOR MYSELF.
TAKE CARE ...
TAKE ...
...YOU TA...
SO, I HOPE ...
MOTOKI'S GONNA LAUGH AT ME...
I HAVE TO KEEP IT TO-GETHER.
OH, GOD ...
HA, HA.

...
NAT-SUO-KUN.
YOU CAN WRITE ABOUT THIS IF YOU WANT.
HUH?
ACTU-ALLY, I WANT YOU TO.
OUR MEMORIES TOGETHER ...
ARE PROOF THAT MOTOKI WAS HERE.
I MIGHT BE OVER 30 BY THE TIME I DEBUT,
BUT WHAT THE HELL, Y'KNOW?
YURI-SAN ...
ALSO,
I THINK I'LL GIVE ACTING...
AN-OTHER SHOT.
...I WON'T BECOME FAMOUS THAT QUICK.
HUH?! WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
OW, OW! I'M JUST JOKING!
GOOD ONE, BOY!
SO, YOU BETTER BECOME A FAMOUS AUTHOR...
AND PICK ME TO STAR IN A MOVIE OF ONE OF YOUR BOOKS BEFORE I'M TOO OLD.

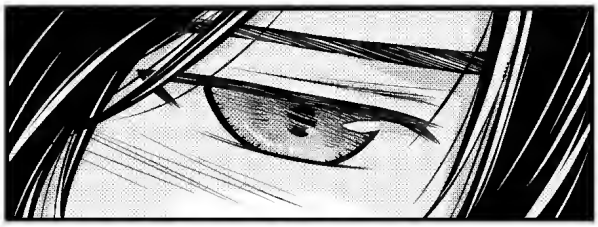
CHAPTER 104: NIGHT OF THE STORM

'KAY.
DON'T FORGET TO TURN OFF THE A/C, OKAY?
GOOD NIGHT.


REEE
REEE
REEE
REEE

NIGHT.

presumably
shut the door and
her eyes were



Diffusion

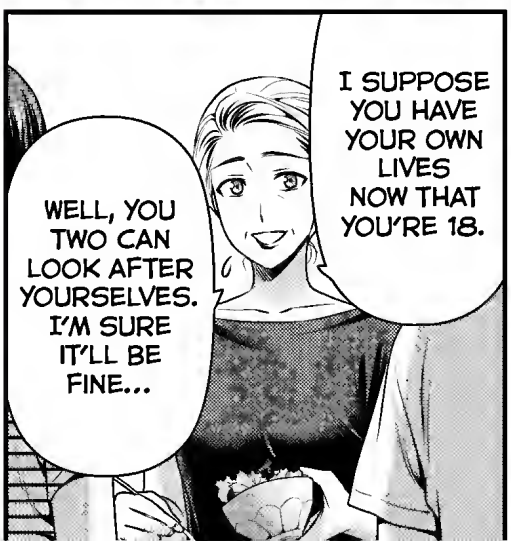
I THOUGHT YOU WENT TO BED.
YEAH, WELL, I FINALLY GOT OUT OF MY SLUMP, SO I WANNA WRITE WHILE I CAN.
HMM. THAT'S GOOD.
CHNK
ガチャ
CHACK
OH.
YOU'RE STILL UP?
...WHY THE LONG FACE, THEN?
I NEVER IMAGINED ...
WE'D FIND OUT THAT HE'D DIED.
I THOUGHT I HAD YURI-SAN'S BEST INTERESTS IN MIND WHEN I PUSHED HER TO RECONNECT WITH HER EX.
SINCE I WENT THROUGH A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE,
...
I KINDA FEEL LIKE ...
...MAYBE I DID SOMETHING I SHOULDN'T HAVE.

I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK THAT MAYBE...
...THAT WOULD HAVE MADE YURI-SAN HAPPIER.
IF I HADN'T SUGGESTED THAT SHE GO SEE HIM...
SHE NEVER WOULD HAVE FOUND OUT.
SHE COULD HAVE GONE ON THINKING MOTOKI-SAN WAS DOING WELL BACK HOME.
GETTING STUCK ON WHAT-IFS WON'T CHANGE ANYTHING.
FINDING OUT WAS A GOOD THING.
IT'S UP TO YURI-SAN TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT...
YEAH, BUT...
AND IT PUSHED HER TO CHASE AFTER HER DREAMS AGAIN.
BUT SHE TOLD YOU TO WRITE ABOUT THEM, RIGHT?
...I CAN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT I WENT TO OSHIMA.
JUST LIKE HOW ...

...I COULD'VE GONE ON AS IF NOTHING HAD HAPPENED...
...AFTER YOU GOT BACK.
HUH?
IF...
IF I'D WORKED INSTEAD OF GOING ON THE TRIP,
THEN EVEN IF YOU ENDED UP SEEING HINA-NEE ON THE ISLAND...
IF YOU HAVE TIME TO WORRY ABOUT WHAT-IFS, THEN WHY DON'T YOU FOCUS ON WRITING?
BUT, THERE'S NO POINT IN THINKING LIKE THAT.
GOOD NIGHT.
RU...
TURN OFF THE A/C BEFORE YOU GO TO BED, PLEASE.

A MEMORIAL SERVICE?

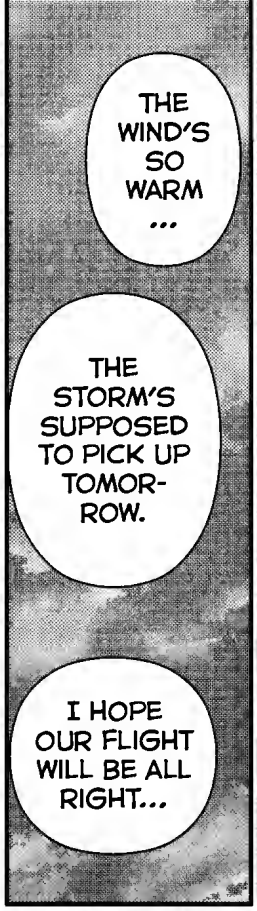
UHH...
I THINK I'LL PASS, TOO.
I HAVE TO WORK.
OH, THAT'S TOO BAD.

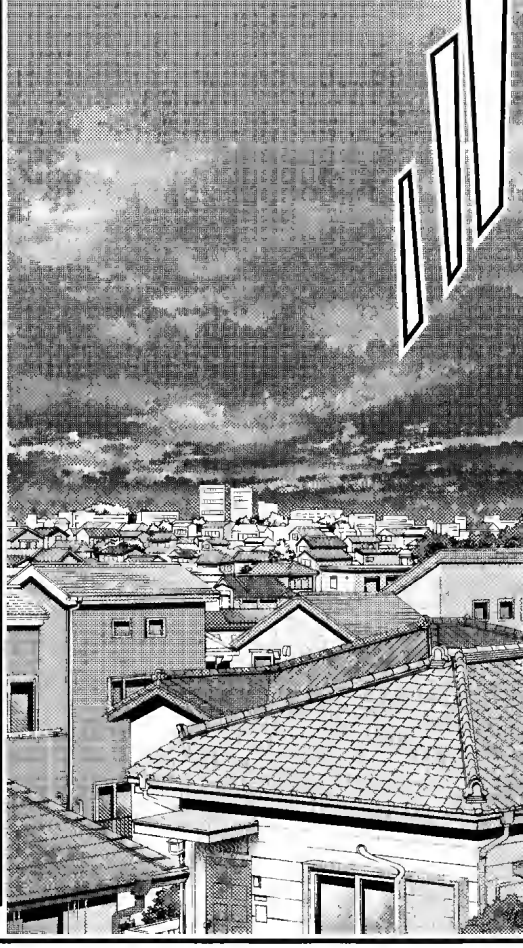

I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE YOUR OWN LIVES NOW THAT YOU'RE 18.
WELL, YOU TWO CAN LOOK AFTER YOURSELVES. I'M SURE IT'LL BE FINE...

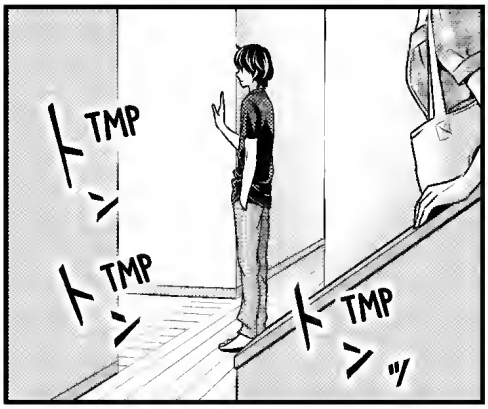
I'M THINKING OF BRINGING AKIHITO-SAN WITH ME TO KAGOSHIMA TO INTRODUCE HIM TO THE FAMILY.
THAT'S RIGHT. IT'S THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF GRAND-PA'S DEATH THIS YEAR, REMEMBER?
WHY DON'T YOU TWO COME WITH US?

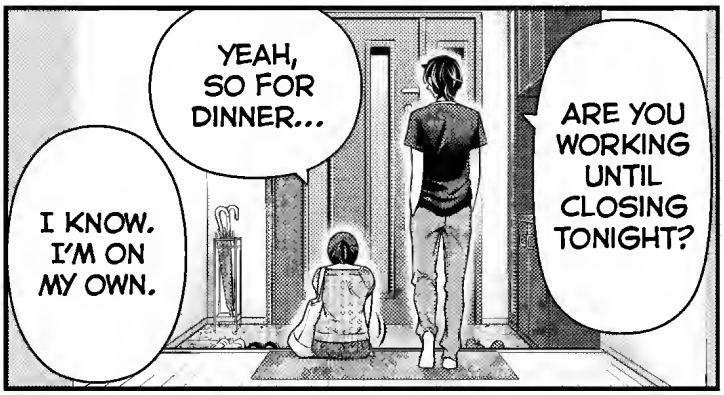
...IF WE ASK YOU TO WATCH THE HOUSE FOR THREE DAYS.
HUH...? THREE DAYS?!
WE'RE GOING TO KAGOSHIMA, AFTER ALL. IT'D BE HARD TO MAKE IT A DAY TRIP.
WE'RE THINKING OF DOING SOME SIGHTSEEING WHILE WE'RE THERE, TOO.
MEANING I'LL BE ALONE WITH RUI ...
...FOR THREE WHOLE DAYS?
WHAT?
GOT A PROB-LEM?
N-NO.
I DON'T, BUT ...
DAMN IT.
WHY AM I GETTING SO FLUS-TERED?

ALL RIGHT.
MAKE SURE TO LOCK UP THE HOUSE.


THE WIND'S SO WARM ...
THE STORM'S SUPPOSED TO PICK UP TOMOR-ROW.
I HOPE OUR FLIGHT WILL BE ALL RIGHT...




TMP
TMP
TMP


YEAH, SO FOR DINNER...
ARE YOU WORKING UNTIL CLOSING TONIGHT?
I KNOW. I'M ON MY OWN.

I HAVE TO GO TO WORK.
CAN YOU TAKE IT FROM HERE?

...

OKAY. BE BACK LATER.
SEE YA.

STAY COOL!

BWOOOOOOO
BLUB
BLUB
STRONG WINDS ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE UNTIL MORNING...
A THUNDER-STORM WILL HIT THE AREA THIS EVENING.
THE WIND'S REALLY PICKING UP, TOO...
THE FORE-CAST IS WAY OFF.
THEY SAID THE STORM WOULDN'T START UNTIL TOMORROW.
M'KAY.
NOT TOO BAD.
LICK
I'M HOME!
TAP TAP
I SHOULD PROBABLY GO PICK HER UP ...
WHEN WAS SHE GETTING OFF WORK AGAIN?
SHE DIDN'T BRING AN UMBRELLA WITH HER, DID SHE?
OH, CRAP. IS RUI GONNA BE OKAY?!
HUH?
WHOA!
IT'S POURING LIKE CRAZY!

WE-
WELCOME BACK! WERE YOU OKAY GETTING HOME?
YEAH. I BORROWED AN UMBRELLA FROM WORK, BUT IT BROKE ON THE WAY.
THEY LET ME GO HOME EARLY SINCE THE WEATHER'S GETTING BAD.
JEEZ ...
THE WIND'S SUPER STRONG!
IT'S LIKE A TY-PHOON OUT THERE.
HANG ON. I'LL GET YOU A TOWEL.
THAT'S OKAY. I'M GONNA TAKE A SHOWER, ANYWAY.
SORRY, BUT CAN YOU BRING ME A CHANGE OF CLOTHES FROM MY ROOM?
HUH ...?
UH ...
SURE ...
SQU
EZ
AK
F
S
S
S
H
T

GAAAH! THIS IS ONE THING I JUST CAN'T GET USED TO!
WHAT? YOU SEE THEM IN THE LAUNDRY ALL THE TIME, RIGHT?
SHE PROBABLY THINKS IT'S NO BIG DEAL TO ME...
LET'S SEE. WILL A T-SHIRT AND SHORTS WORK?
ALSO, UN-
UNDER-WEAR...
GRAB
SHIV
SHIV
STAY COOL.
COOL!
RRRUM
SNAP
WHAT, WHAT, WHAT ?!
HWA-AAH!
R-R-R-RU?! ARE YOU OUT OF THE SHOWER ALREADY?!
THIS BETTER NOT BE A PRANK!

THE LIGHTS ARE OUT IN THE OTHER HOUSES, TOO.
IS THE POWER OUT?!
SKSH
WAIT ...
HUH?
UGH ...
I CAN'T SEE A THING...
AH!
THAT'S RIGHT, RUI...!
SERI-OUSLY? NOW?
I'M FINE! WHAT HAPPENED ?!
THE POWER'S OUT!
I'M BRING-ING YOU SOME CLOTHES NOW!
WAIT THE-
WHIF
RUIII! YOU OKAY ?!
I-IT'S RISKY, BUT I'LL JUST NEED TO FEEL MY WAY AROUND.

SHUT UP!
SAYS THE GUY WHO FELL DOWN THE STAIRS.
WAIT, IT'S DANGER-OUS!
IT'S OKAY. I'M WEARING A TOWEL, SO I'LL JUST COME TO YOU!
AGH!
FTMP TMP TMP
FLASH!
HUH?
MOOSH

AH...
...!
FWIP
HWAH! S-S-SORRY!
ゴゴゴ
...
BA-DOOM

R-
RUI
?!
ARE YOU... AFRAID OF LIGHT-NING?
Y-YEAH, I GUESS IT DOESN'T USUALLY FALL THIS CLOSE, BUT...
HOW LONG ...
IS THE STORM SUPPOSED TO LAST?
UHH. THE FORECAST SAID ALL NIGHT...
WILL YOU ...
...STAY WITH ME TONIGHT, PLEASE?
ゴロゴロゴロゴロ...
FLICKER

FLINCH
ビクッ!!

Y'KNOW ...
EVEN THOUGH THERE'S A GOOD EXPLANATION FOR IT,
I FEEL LIKE AL WOULD SOCK ME IF HE FOUND OUT WE WERE SLEEPING IN THE SAME BED.

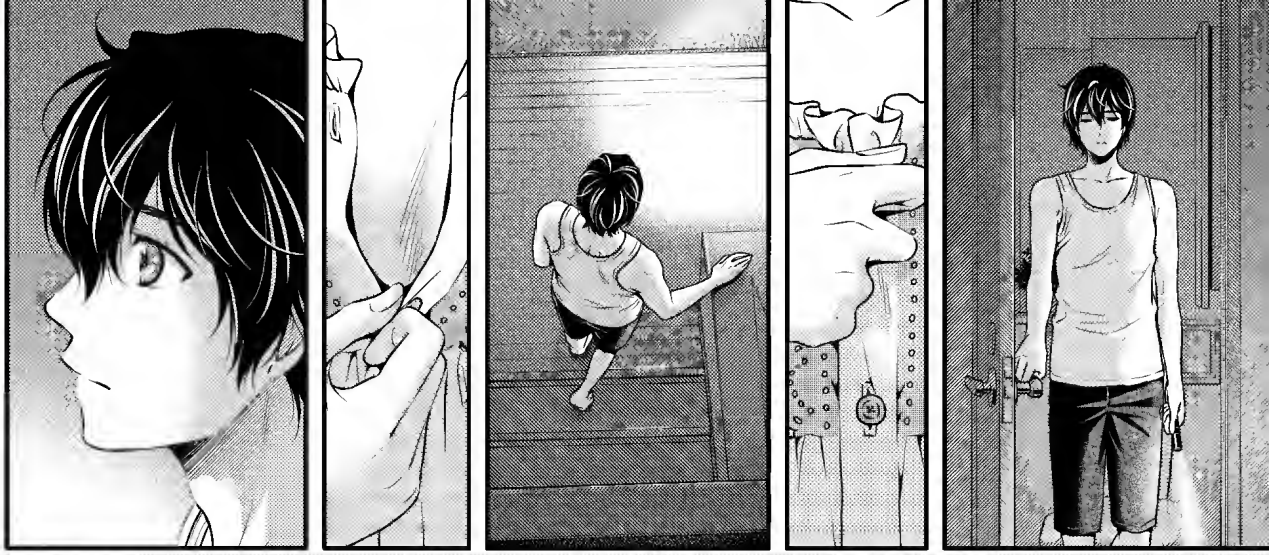
SQU
EEZE

...

...WHEN SOMEONE'S HOLDING YOUR HAND, RIGHT?
BUT IT'S NOT AS SCARY...

...!
JUST TELL ME IF YOU DON'T LIKE THIS.

SWIF
...
YOUR HAND'S SWEATY.
...ARE YOU NERVOUS?
HUH?
NO. BATH-ROOM.
CHIK
ARE YOU MAD?
NOT AT ALL...
FSHH
SCRUB
SCRUB
I KNEW IT.
IT'S JUST NOT THE SAME WITH AL.



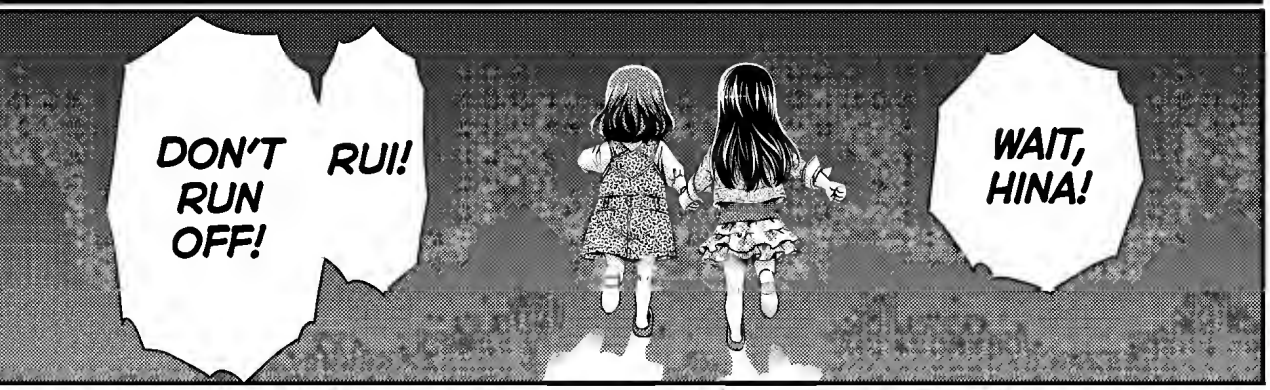
…to be continued.

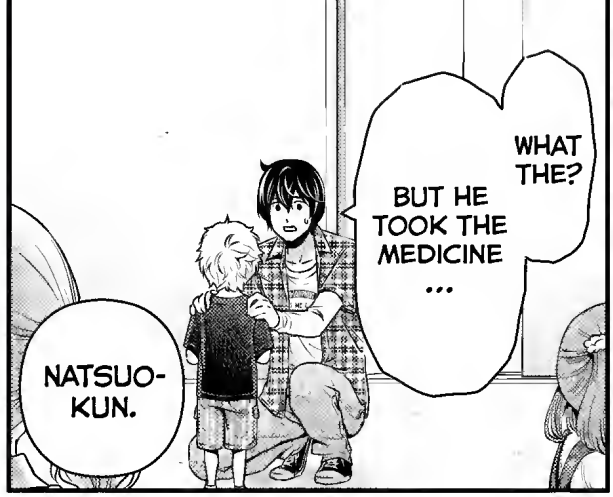
Extra Manga

SWEET HOME MAGIC

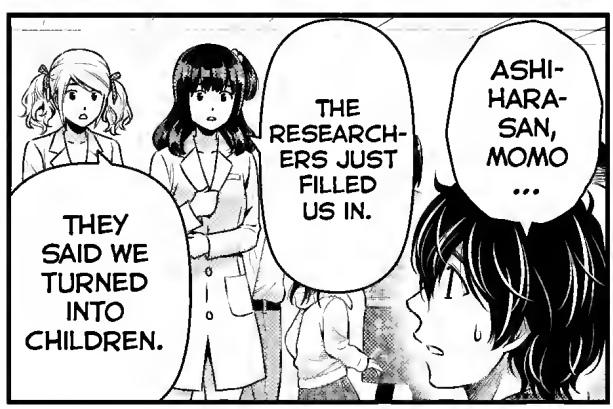
☆ The Story So Far ☆

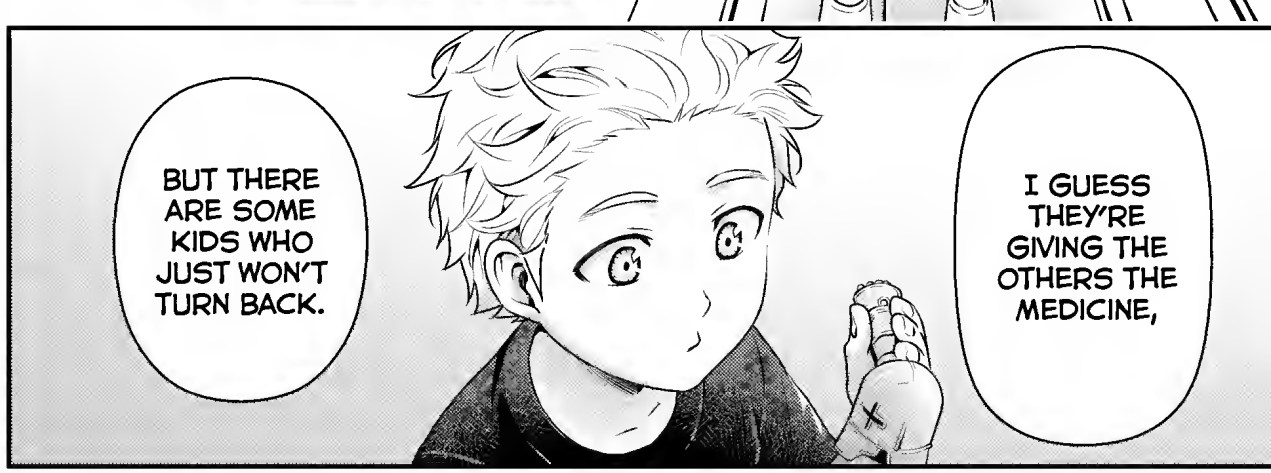
After a mysterious drug turns Hina and Rui into children, Natsuo desperately searches for a way to turn them back, but just when he's about to make them take an antidote...



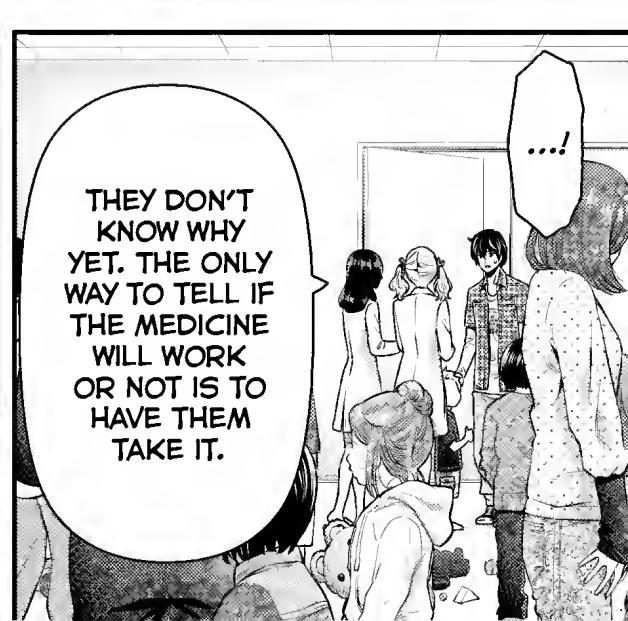

NATSUO-KUN.
BUT HE TOOK THE MEDICINE ...
WHAT THE?

HUH ...?
AL?!

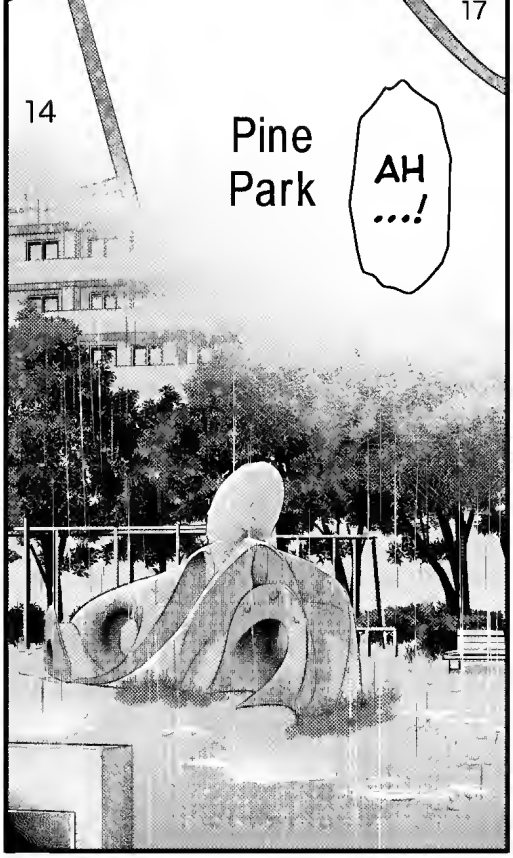

THEY SAID WE TURNED INTO CHILDREN.
THE RESEARCH-ERS JUST FILLED US IN.
ASHI-HARA-SAN, MOMO ...


BUT THERE ARE SOME KIDS WHO JUST WON'T TURN BACK.
I GUESS THEY'RE GIVING THE OTHERS THE MEDICINE,

SOME PEOPLE COULD BE STUCK AS CHILDREN FOREVER.
AND THAT MAYBE ...

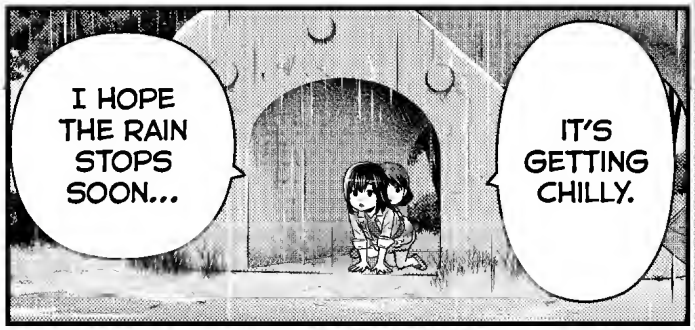

THEY DON'T KNOW WHY YET. THE ONLY WAY TO TELL IF THE MEDICINE WILL WORK OR NOT IS TO HAVE THEM TAKE IT.
...!

WELL, THERE YOU HAVE IT.
THAT'S WHY, WE NEED TO FIND THOSE TWO...
...AND ADMINIS-TER THE MEDICINE IMMEDI-
DASH
!
BRING THEM BACK AS SOON AS YOU FIND THEM!
WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO TURN THEM BACK IF WE'RE LUCKY!
ポツ PLIP
ポツ PLIP
ゴロロロ GRRR
SIGN: PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLES ONLY
SPEED EQUIPMENT
MC GASOLINE ALLEY
RIDING POPS
パシャ PLISH
パシャ PLISH
ザーッ SSSS


Pine Park
AH ...!

17
WHERE MIGHT KIDS GO AROUND HERE?

THEY CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN TOO FAR WITH THOSE TINY LEGS.
WHERE THE HELL ARE THEY?
Residential Map
THERE'S NO WAY THEY GOT ON A TRAIN ...


I HOPE THE RAIN STOPS SOON...
IT'S GETTING CHILLY.

ARE YOU OKAY?
ACHOO
BLOW YOUR NOSE.

IT'S NOT SCARY AS LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER!
BAP

SNIFF
I'M SOWWY ...
IT'S OKAY!
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, RUI!

!
YOU CAN'T JUST DISAPPEAR LIKE THAT.
I WAS WORRIED SICK.
THERE YOU ARE...
MC GASOLINE ALLEY
I THOUGHT ...
THAT MAN WAS GOING TO DO SOMETHING WEIRD TO SIS...
WOMEN'S INTUITION?
SHE'S SO YOUNG, TOO...
D-DON'T YELL AT HER.
RUI WAS JUST TRYING TO HELP ME.
THERE ARE SOME KIDS WHO JUST WON'T TURN BACK.
WE CAN TURN THEM BACK IF WE'RE LUCKY!
THERE'S A CHANCE ...
THEY COULD BE STUCK AS KIDS FOREVER.
ARE YOU ...
GOING TO TAKE US BACK THERE?

REALLY?!
YEAH.

IT WOULD BE A COMPLETE DISASTER...
...IF ONLY ONE OF THEM TURNED BACK.

NO, I WON'T.

THEY'RE AS CLOSE AS SISTERS CAN BE.
IF THERE'S A CHANCE THEY'LL BE TORN APART, THEN I'D RATHER...

I WANT WARM MILK!
WITH HONEY!
I'LL MAKE YOU TWO SOMETHING WARM TO DRINK.

ALL RIGHT.
LET'S GO HOME, OKAY?

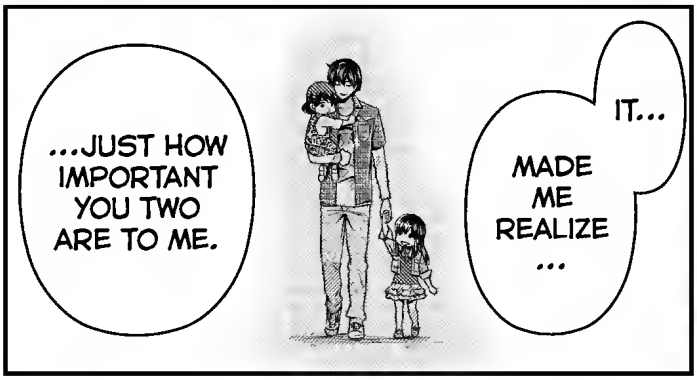
DON'T WORRY.
I'LL BE SURE TO PROTECT YOU...
...AS YOUR OLDER BROTHER.
OKAY.
THEN ...
UNTIL YOU TWO GROW UP.
I PROM-ISE.
...WHEN I GROW UP...
...I'LL MARRY YOU!

HUH ...?
NO FAIR, SIS!
ME, TOO!
ME, TOO!
I'LL MARRY YOU, TOO, WHEN I GROW UP!
THANKS.
I'M A LUCKY GUY.
OKAY, OKAY...
WHAT?
BUT I SAID I WOULD FIRST.
I WAS GONNA SAY IT FIRST!
I'D BETTER MAKE YOU TWO HAPPY, THEN.
THAT'S RIGHT!

YOU HAVE TO TREAT US BOTH LIKE PRINCESSES!
NATSUO-KUN...
ARE YOU AWAKE?
WHA ...?
GUYS ...
YOU'RE BACK...
BACK ?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THE ONLY THING THAT'S BACK IS YOUR CONSCIOUS-NESS.
HUH ...?
I DON'T KNOW IF YOU HAD A BAD REACTION OR SOME-THING,
BUT YOU GOT DIZZY AND PASSED OUT AFTER TAKING THE SUP-PLEMENT I GAVE YOU.
YOU'VE BEEN UNCON-SCIOUS THIS WHOLE TIME.

I HAD A DREAM ...
...

I FELT SO AWFUL. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
ARE YOU SURE YOU FEEL OKAY?
YOU WERE SWEATING A LOT, BUT...


IT... MADE ME REALIZE ...
...JUST HOW IMPORTANT YOU TWO ARE TO ME.

OH, PLEASE.
WE WEREN'T BEFORE?
WE'VE ALWAYS MEANT A LOT TO EACH OTHER!

IT'D BE NICE IF...
...I CAN PROTECT THEM FROM NOW ON, TOO.
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN A CRYBABY, HUH?
HUH? WHERE'D THAT COME FROM?
SWEET HOME MAGIC
END

YOU MUST BE HUNGRY.
I'LL MAKE SOME POR-RIDGE.
I AL-READY MADE SOME.
WHAT? THAT WAS FAST, RUI!

DOME X GIRL

Preview

THEY CAN'T HOLD BACK ANY LONGER.

THE STORMY NIGHT THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING!

What will happen to Natsuo and Rui?!

VOLUME 12

Domestic Girlfriend 11

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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